

470

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A Platform for the Free Discussion of
Issues in the Field of Religion and
Their Bearing on Education

MAY-JUNE, 1947



The Relation of Religion to Public Education

The Basic Principles

A Report

Critical Evaluations of the Report

Religious Education

Seeks to present, on an adequate, scientific plane, those factors which make for improvement in religious and moral education. The Journal does not defend particular points of view, contributors alone being responsible for opinions expressed in their articles. It gives its authors entire freedom of expression, without official endorsement of any sort. Articles in Religious Education are indexed in the EDUCATION INDEX which is on file in educational institutions and public libraries.

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Religion In Public Education

This issue of *Religious Education* is devoted primarily to one significant topic, Religion in Public Education. And there are two important divisions of the topic, one a report and the other evaluations of the report.

By special permission of the American Council on Education the recently issued report, "The Relation of Religion to Public Education—The Basic Principles" is reprinted. This outstanding report is the contribution of an interfaith committee which has been working since 1944. Fourteen prominent leaders who constituted the committee have set forth the basic principles which they believe ought to govern the place of religion in public education.

In the second division fifteen educators—representatives from various educational and religious institutions, from the three major faiths—Jewish, Roman Catholic, Protestant—laymen and ministers—have presented critical evaluations of the report.

For over four decades the Religious Education Association, thru its meetings and thru its publications, has been inter-relating religion and education and education and religion. So the topic of Religion in Public Education is of vital concern to the Association.

The Editorial Committee believes that this issue of *Religious Education* will both furnish information and will stimulate thought to clarify a basic problem of our democracy.

The Editorial Committee

RELIGION

In Public Education

The Religious Education Association is indebted to three groups for the major material in this unusual issue — (1) to the American Council on Education for special permission to reprint the report, "The Relation of Religion to Public Education—The Basic Principles"; (2) to the interfaith committee who formulated the report; and (3) to the fifteen persons who wrote evaluations of the report. Our thanks to each group and to each person who contributed to the preparation of the material for this issue.

The Editorial Committee

I

THE RELATION OF RELIGION To Public Education The Basic Principles

By the
Committee on Religion and Education
of the American Council on Education

INTRODUCTION

THAT THE PRESENT period is marked by an increased interest in religion perhaps goes without saying. It is evidenced in books, magazines, newspaper editorials and columns, on the stage and screen, and in less tangible ways. This growing interest is attested in education by the rapid spread of the weekday religious education movement, by the widely reported mood of seriousness with respect to religion on college campuses, and by increased discussion in educational circles of the responsibility of school and college in the field of religion. No great "revival of religion" is in evidence, but there is a "stirring of the waters."

These signs of awakened interest in religion are variously appraised. By some they are thought to be only temporary and due to the stress and strain incident to economic depression and war. There are others who believe that this interest springs from a desire to escape the rigorous requirements of living in a time of crisis and hardship. It is well to keep in mind that not every form in which a religious mood expresses itself is wholesome or indicative of an abiding attitude. But those who believe that religion is fundamental in man's life will not be deterred by manifest crudities of expression from seeing the significance of an appeal in time of crisis to the ultimate sources of faith, courage, and hope. No more authentic note has been sounded in the record of human experience than this:

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"Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee . . .!"

Certainly the intensified religious concern that is manifest today demands attention by educators. It is part of the complex situation with which education must deal. This is not to say that every particular popular demand must be accepted. Educators may not abdicate their responsibility for leadership in educational matters, and this often requires resistance to a popular mood for such time as may be required for thinking through a complicated question in democratic fashion. But even if it be assumed that existing conceptions and policies with reference to religion and education call for no changes whatever, that position cannot rest merely on affirmation; it must be supported by fresh reasoning in the light of a changing situation.

It is highly proper, therefore, that all proposals for teaching religion in the schools should be closely scrutinized, for no innovations should come about without benefit of thoughtful criticism. It may well be argued that many proposals for bridging the gap between religion and education are ill-considered and fraught with danger. However, if untenable proposals are here and there advanced and adopted in the field of religious education, they may be in fact a result of an educational policy that has tended to isolate religion from other phases of community life. Nothing elemental in human life can be indefinitely isolated in this fashion. It comes back to protest in unexpected ways. This is happening today in the religious field.

It is urged that educators, and also the lay public with whom the determination of educational policy ultimately rests in a democracy, approach this problem as objectively as the committee tried to do in order that sound judgments may be reached. There is need for the most thorough presentation of every point of view provided it is seriously held and factually supported. Much writing and speaking

have rested on assumptions with reference to the existing situation that run counter to ascertainable facts. Prejudice has not been lacking in presenting either pros or cons. The committee has tried to say nothing in this report about which it is not ready to hear criticism with the same respect that is bespoken for its own judgments.

In preparing this report many sources have been drawn upon, but few citations are given because it is earnestly desired that the judgments expressed shall be weighed on their merits, dissociated from particular controversial discussions and special pleadings.

In such a report as is here presented, it is not to be assumed that every sentence or phrase is in the form that each member of the committee would have chosen. Yet it records essential agreement upon a document that represents a genuinely cooperative effort.

I. THE SECULARIZATION OF MODERN LIFE

THE SECULAR character of our public educational system cannot be understood without reference to the secularization of life in the Western world. The influence upon our culture of the Judaeo-Christian tradition has been profound; in large measure it has given us our system of values. But in modern times the values originally associated with religion have been largely dissociated from religious sanctions. Religion continues to evidence itself in fundamental beliefs, in a mood of reverence, and in specifically religious observances. Yet religion has largely lost its significance for many areas of human activity. Politics, business and industry, and the broad patterns of group behavior are no longer responsive to definite religious sanctions, however much the forms of religion continue to receive traditional respect. This is the expression of secularism in recent history, not a denial of religion, but the denial of its relevance to the major activities of life.

There is another and more extreme sense of the term "secularism" which denotes a definite philosophy of life which has no place for religious creeds or for the institutions of worship. Some of those who write currently in defense of secularism are advocating a philosophy that is a substitute for religion. This is something quite different from the historical development of gradual dissociation between the imperatives of religion and the demands of the world. They appear to regard secularism as a complete way of life, thus implying that it is an ethical philosophy by which one may live and a philosophy which rejects religion in all its historical forms.

We reject secularism as a philosophy of life and we cannot agree that it has ever been accepted as such by the American people. Those who do adopt it tend to make it, in effect, a rival religion and to insist with unwitting inconsistency that it become the basis of American education. On the other hand, we recognize as historical fact the secularization of life and education, finding the real significance of that term in the separation between religion and the rest of life. This secularization of life as a modern phenomenon does not imply an intention to destroy religious faith or religious institutions, but rather to isolate them from politics, business, and education. But it is our contention that although secularization in this sense involves no such negative philosophical assumptions as some current writers find in it, it does tend inevitably toward the eclipse of religion by ignoring it as an essential part of the culture and rendering it innocuous. In particular, the secularization of education tends in *actual practice* to outrun the original intention it expressed. We are convinced that the vast majority of the American people, to whom the schools belong, would repudiate the assumption that secularization of the schools expresses an intentional devaluation of religious faith or religious institutions. But how many of them see the

ultimate *implications* of secularization is another matter. It has been supported as an educational policy as vigorously by some churchmen as by persons outside the church.

Further confusion results from the fact that the word "secularization" is often used in relation to the general subject of this report as denoting the separation of education from church control. We shall have something to say later concerning the church-state problem, but at this point it should be noted that the divorce of public education from ecclesiastical control, which is an accepted American policy, is not synonymous with the separation of religion from education. The fact that our population is religiously heterogeneous puts the separation of church and state, as a broad political principle, beyond debate, regardless of what theories may be held concerning what would be appropriate in a different kind of society.

Let us now consider the origin of the secularization of life as a historical movement which antedates by a long period the secularization of American education. No single explanation of the beginning of the secularist trend can be given. The causes of historical changes are always multiple. Cultural forces of great magnitude have long been at work in the Western world.

The history of Europe in the Middle Ages is in great part the history of the Christian church. Christianity furnished the central framework of ideas and values about which medieval society was built. The bond which united the Western world was primarily religious, not political. Such unity as was attained was an ecclesiastical achievement. In the late Middle Ages there obtained what has been called the "medieval synthesis" — a weaving together of philosophy, theology, and individual and social ethics in a comprehensive Christian system of thought and life. This is not to say that this system was always observed as a discipline. As is true today, ethical principles were sometimes more honored in the breach than in

the observance. But they were *honored*. There was general acceptance of common spiritual sanctions which included the social, political, and economic spheres of activity as well as that of private, personal relationships. There was an "ethic" of group relationships that was integrated with the code of personal morals.

The conception of universal moral law which underlies the modern system of common law, the body of reciprocal rights and duties which gave stability to feudal society, the principle of representative government which the Middle Ages bequeathed to the modern world, and that extraordinary inclusive system of social ethics which gave unity and coherence to the common life — these are among the achievements for which the church must be given chief credit. They are cited here not to foster nostalgia for the Middle Ages, but to indicate the background against which modern secularism must be viewed. However much it may suffer by comparison with the modern era, medieval Europe had a framework of spiritual unity which the modern world conspicuously lacks. It should be possible to learn from the past without returning to it.

This unity and coherence of thought and life disappeared with the fragmentizing of the Western world politically and religiously. The scope of religious sanctions was gradually narrowed, and significant areas of the common life of men acquired an autonomy of their own. In particular, the economic sphere began to take on an aspect of self-entertainment. The concept of "economic man" and the contemporary slogan "business is business" are expressions of the changed outlooks. Such notions would have been well-nigh meaningless to the men of the Middle Ages. They strikingly illustrate the secularist trend.

The rise of the middle class operated to shift the locus of power to competing economic groups, and later to foster the conception of economic processes as automatic. In the course of time the notion

that economic controls normally resided in the "mechanisms of the market" came to be dominant, compelling the secularization of the economic sphere. This development is a major concern to many students of the culture who see in it the divorce of essential areas of the common life from the religious sanctions that were once acknowledged as applicable to all conduct. The struggle in modern education to gain a secure place for the study of controversial issues has arisen in considerable part from this self-sufficiency of the economic sphere. The right of the schools to scrutinize the social order has been challenged largely because the economic structure of society has been held to be self-justifying and immune to criticism. To say this involves no judgment with reference to particular economic theories. The point is rather that the tendency to regard the economic order as outside the proper sphere of moral criticism, whether in school or church, is a secularist phenomenon of prime importance.

By a curious anomaly, religion itself has contributed to this situation. The *laissez faire* philosophy was originally in large part an expression of belief about the way God rules the world. It was maintained that the automatic operation of the market was a divinely ordained instrumentality for securing the maximum social good through the interplay of individual efforts directed by self-interest. The economic order was presided over by an "absentee God." It seems probable that the idea was a grand rationalization in support of a cultural movement that had acquired a vast momentum. This conception of God has been outmoded, but the *laissez faire* idea dies hard. The contemporary effort of the major religious groups in America, as in other industrialized countries, to develop criteria for evaluating and criticizing the forms of economic life is an emphatic protest against this tendency to make the economic system a self-sufficient mechanism.

We have stressed the economic aspect

of this subject because it is perhaps the most conspicuous example of the secularist view according to which one phase of the culture can properly remain immune from the ethical impact of religion. The same inhibition has been evident in other phases of the culture, including practically every aspect of the general welfare which requires political action for its defense and improvement. It is a matter of common observation that attempts on the part of the pulpit to influence political action, even in entirely nonpartisan fashion, have called forth admonitions to "stick to the gospel." It is the essence of secularism to render religion innocuous by isolating it from practical affairs.

Happily, this resistance is yielding to moral pressure, and organized religion is again speaking with a greater measure of prophetic effectiveness. In the Protestant churches a vigorous antisecularist movement has gone by the name of the "social gospel." The Catholic church has long striven toward an organic conception of society, in which functional groups and social instrumentalities would operate under a unitary moral law. Judaism has sought to re-establish throughout the social order the broad concept of social justice, as proclaimed by the prophets of Israel and developed by the later Jewish sages. All these are manifestations of opposition to the modern trend toward separation of the religious from the secular.

Another major factor in the secularization of life is the growth of the modern scientific movement which at its inception revolutionized man's view of his world. It should go without saying that we wish to give no support to antiscientific notions or movements. The scientific method itself has a profoundly moral aspect. It is a symptom of secularism, however, that the scientific sphere of activity should have claimed and so largely secured for itself an autonomy of its own. The struggle going on within the scientific fraternity over the relation of science to

values bears eloquent testimony to the dualism that has come to characterize modern life — an artificial separation between what may be called the things of the mind and the things of the spirit. The current effort on the part of socially minded scientists to make science the servant of values would seem to be a sound application of the instrumentalist principle which has received so much emphasis in recent philosophical writing.

The function of science, as such, is to study the phenomenal world and to render it intelligible to a maximum degree. It is concerned with phenomena about which persons of equal competence and equipped with equivalent apparatus can validate each other's findings. But the ultimate nature of reality is something about which scientists in the same field and of equal competence differ, and presumably will continue to differ. This is inevitable because ultimate reality is the concern, not of science, but of philosophy and religion. Some of our greatest scientists are philosophical agnostics because they find no guidance in their respective disciplines concerning the nature of reality. Others of equivalent standing in their fields hold to historical religious beliefs.

Here again, however, it must be recognized that many persons have in the name of religion contributed to an obscurantist, antiscientific view of life by false claims to authority in the scientific sphere. If science is not a substitute for religion, neither can religion be a substitute for science. It is not the province of religion to make pronouncements in the field of biology and geology. The long history of conflict between science and theology is a melancholy record of obstruction to the free play of intelligence in both the scientific and the religious spheres. It has hampered religion as well as science. Happily, the error underlying this obstructionist attitude is coming to be recognized by religious leaders in all the major faith groups, each of which has

contributed notably to leadership in scientific inquiry, experimentation, and discovery. But if there is no warrant for hostility to science on the part of religion, it is equally true that science can offer no substitute for religious faith.

II. THE SECULARIZATION OF EDUCATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

THE FOREGOING discussion of the secularist mood and outlook that characterize our time has seemed necessary as a background for consideration of the secularization of education. The latter phenomenon could hardly have come about without the former, for in an important sense it is all of a piece with the secularization of the culture. The changing world-outlook and the development of an autonomous economic system within an autonomous political order created an intellectual and moral environment in which the secularization of education could take place with a minimum of resistance.

Yet we think it a cardinal error to assume that the extreme degree of secularization which has come about in many of our school systems — by no means all of them — was an inevitable consequence of the forces whose operations we have been considering. Competent researches show the contrary. The immediate cause of the exclusion of religious teaching from the schools was sectarian conflict.

It is well known that prior to the establishment of our public school system, the church played a dominant role in education. Indeed, the church has been called the mother of the school. American educational history is in this respect largely a projection of the European tradition in its Protestant forms. It was Puritan New England, where the government took a theocratic form, that bequeathed to the nation its system of publicly controlled schools. This pattern developed early in New England because its component states were so largely of one faith that the community tended to reflect and perpetuate the religious tradition which had been dominant from early colonial times. This

religious unity resulted in no small part from religious intolerance which had made life uncomfortable for dissident groups. The net result, however, was to furnish a congenial climate for the development of community-controlled education. The ensuing struggle over religious teaching in the schools was a contest over sectarianism, not over the importance of religion in education.

We may, therefore, dismiss the notion that the American people set about deliberately to eliminate religion from education. For a variety of reasons they gradually came to accept the principle of publicly controlled education, maintained by public funds, and to exclude church control over public education as a matter of policy. This, of course, did not mean the elimination of private and parochial schools. Having accepted this principle, the American people felt driven to the conclusion that if religious teaching could not be carried on in the public schools without sectarian strife it would have to go. In part, the reluctance with which this decision was reached was tempered by the hope that the rising Sunday-school movement would supply what was lacking in the public schools. The responsibility for the condition that made the decision inevitable must rest heavily on the religious community itself.

Horace Mann, secretary of the Massachusetts State Board of Education, 1837-48, who bore the brunt of the battle over the exclusion from the schools of sectarian religious teaching, entertained the hope that a way would be found to foster religious faith in a nonsectarian and therefore generally acceptable fashion. His overwhelming concern was with the chaos which he saw in the religious situation. Making due allowance for a certain extravagance of statement, one finds some of his comments highly illuminating. When he looked for textbooks in which some common faith was expressed, he found none that were "free from the advocacy of particular 'tenets' and 'sects'." The proposal that each town or school dis-

trict should determine what doctrine should be taught called forth this scornful rejoinder: "It is easy to see that the experiment would not stop with having half a dozen conflicting creeds taught by authority of law, in the different schools of the same town or vicinity. Majorities will change in the same place. One sect may have the ascendancy, today; another, tomorrow . . . This year, the everlasting fires of hell will burn, to terrify the impenitent; next year, and without any repentance, its eternal flames will be extinguished — to be rekindled forever, or to be quenched forever, as it may be decided at annual town meetings. This year, under Congregational rule, the Rev. Mr. So and So, and the Rev. Dr. So and So, will be on the committee; but next year, these Reverends and Reverend Doctors will be plain Misterters — never having had apostolical consecration from the Bishop. This year, the ordinance of baptism is inefficacious without immersion; next year one drop of water will be as good as forty fathoms."¹

Mann actually favored religious instruction in the schools to the fullest extent possible "without invading those rights of conscience which are established by the laws of God and guaranteed to us by the Constitution of the State."² He once wrote, "Entirely to discard the inculcation of the great doctrines of morality and of natural theology has a vehement tendency to drive mankind into opposite extremes; to make them devotees on one side, or profligates on the other; each about equally regardless of the true constituents of human welfare. Against a tendency to these fatal extremes, the beautiful and sublime truths of ethics and of natural religion have a poisoning power."³

The hope of Horace Mann that a body of commonly accepted religious beliefs

might be taught in the schools was not realized. Many entertain that hope today. There are reasons, however, for regarding such a proposal as of doubtful wisdom and equally doubtful feasibility. The point to be stressed is that the *intent* of the movement which Mann led was not to exclude all religious subject matter from the educative process as carried on under public auspices. Yet he saw no way to avoid it, and he was ready, apparently, to accept the policy which actually led to that result if that was the only way to keep the schools free from religious controversy. How much he would have deplored the ultimate consequence can readily be imagined.

The assumption that a school system from which all study of religion should be excluded was what the American people really wanted when they secularized education runs counter not only to our educational, but to our religious history. Contrary to what seems to be a common assumption, organized religion was much less strong at the time the Republic was founded than at the time when the struggle over religion in the schools was at its height. It is estimated that at the end of the colonial period not more than five percent of the population were active church members. The percentage almost trebled in the next fifty years. These facts do not invalidate our generalizations about the secularization of the culture, for church membership is not an index of the influence of religion upon the social order. The facts do, however, make it difficult to regard the exclusion of religion from the schools as a direct expression of flagging interest in religion as such. Our purpose here is to correct the impression that the divorce of education from religion was what was desired when sectarian teaching was banished from the schools.

Thus, it appears that while the secularization of education took its place historically as an aspect of a long-term cul-

¹Raymond B. Culver, *Horace Mann and Religion in the Massachusetts Public Schools*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929), p. 208.

²*Ibid.*, p. 207.

³*Ibid.*, p. 42.

tural trend, it has quite outrun the intention of those educational leaders who initiated the movement. In so doing, it probably reinforced the general secularist trend in America. May it be supposed that any interest or concern that does not find active expression in the public schools can hold a permanent place in the public mind. We are not suggesting that all education of the young must take place in school. Obviously, the school is not the only educator. The home is probably most influential in putting a stamp upon the characters of children and giving them an outlook on life. Organized recreation is also a great educator. But these extra school agencies are not, and should not be, expected to preempt an educational area from which thereafter the school remains aloof. On the contrary, the importance of the home and of organized play impel the school to give increasing attention to education for family life and to extra school recreational activities. To leave religious education entirely to church and synagogue is in contrast to educational policy in other matters. To do this is to invite the same indifference to religion that we should expect to result in the political sphere from ignoring the institutions of government. This is not to anticipate the consideration of problems and difficulties that we have yet to explore, but only to ask that the presumable effect upon the religious life of the community of continually ignoring religion in the public schools be faced frankly.

Also, we emphasize the fact that this dualism in education cuts directly across the trend in modern educational theory and practice toward identifying school and community. However many or diverse the instrumentalities for education may be, the public school is increasingly regarded as a unifying agency. To have avoided sectarian teaching in the public schools was a real and necessary achievement, but to perpetuate in education a dualism in our culture is another matter. As time

passes, the inconsistency of excluding the study of religion becomes more, rather than less, marked. The school itself is emphasizing a division, a split, in the educative process which its own philosophy increasingly repudiates. To avoid this contradiction one must either accept the patent inference that religious education is relatively unimportant and a marginal interest, or assume that religion is a matter so remote from life that it admits of no integration with the general educational program.

III. WHAT WE MEAN BY RELIGION

WHenever the subject we have here under discussion is broached the question arises: What is meant by religion? The very raising of the question is significant in two respects.

First, it is characteristic of a secular age that people should have no clear understanding of what religion means. We have noted the tendency of secularization to foster a denial of the relevance of religion to politics, business, and other practical affairs. When the common life is so largely divorced from the sanctions of the religious-ethical tradition, with the result that an artificial split occurs in the culture between the religious and the secular, religion tends to become "a private idiosyncrasy." Had this isolation of religion not occurred, the question, What is religion? would not so often be raised.

Secondly, we hold that inability to agree on a definition of religion should not deter any community from giving consideration to the place of religion in the school program. The very fact that so many diverse ideas are held today concerning the nature and function of religion accentuates the importance of thoughtful study.

Nevertheless, it seems appropriate to indicate at this point what we think religion means in thought, feeling, and observance to the masses of the American people. Nothing that can be said in such brief space can be taken as adequate.

Nor will any general statement made for the purposes of this discussion be what adherents of a particular faith would give voice to on their own account.

In simple terms religion implies an ultimate reality to which supreme allegiance must be given. To this ultimate reality men have from time immemorial given a name — God. The religious man finds warrant for all his conceptions of worth, of right, of duty, and of human destiny in his relationship to this ultimate reality. There is a wide difference in the ways in which men define this concept of God, ranging from highly personal to abstract philosophical terms; from emphasis on the transcendent to emphasis on the immanent; from a frankly supernatural conception to one that endows the cosmos itself with spiritual purpose and power. However, religion affirms overwhelmingly a reality that transcends the flux of events and constrains men toward the true and the good.

On the subjective side religion commands men to respond to divine imperative. It challenges them to an act of faith and to a commitment of the will. The extent to which religion is rational and the extent to which it is emotional are matters on which no agreement exists, but that it is profoundly volitional, calling for supreme personal commitment and loyalty, all are agreed. What one believes about God, about man and about the world has momentous consequences in life and conduct.

But religion in human experience is by no means wholly accounted for in individualistic terms. It is also social and corporate. It expresses itself in institutions which organize themselves about the function of group worship. Here again there is great variety. There are highly elaborated rituals that have grown up in the more sacramentarian forms of religion, and there is the simple ritual of silence in which the worshippers feel themselves to be in the presence of God. The unifying principle is organized wor-

ship in which men seek to "make the Most High their habitation." In the churches and synagogues of America there is an extremely wide range of theological as well as ritualistic differences, but they have in common this principle of corporate worship.

It should be noted that throughout these pages religion is referred to as a phase of the culture because we believe the responsibility of public education with reference to religion is determined by fidelity to the culture in its entirety. In an important sense, however, religion is more than a *part* of the culture. A vital religious faith permeates every cultural good and influences every aspect of life. To those who take it seriously, religious faith is the spiritual foundation of society and indispensable to an enduring social structure. We believe that, in spite of the secularization of American life, the majority of our people are desirous that this foundation be greatly strengthened.

IV. WHAT WE MEAN BY "TEACHING"

AT THIS POINT we would draw attention to what seems to us a basic difficulty in the solution of the problem we are facing. Twice during recent years the nature of the teaching and learning process has come in for intensive re-examination. First, with the development of the progressive education movement during the early part of this century, the traditional notion of education as imparting facts and indoctrinating with ideas was sharply challenged. The educative process came to be conceived as active rather than passive, as centering in the learner's felt needs and purposes, and as depending for its effectiveness on his own confirmatory response to what was presented to him, and its purposeful incorporation in his life. The slogan, "not what to think, but how to think," became a common expression of the aim of education. It is not suggested that this movement has been influential

throughout American education; on the contrary. But it has been highly influential in the great teacher-education centers and in educational literature. And it is probably safe to say that it has left a permanent deposit in the development of the American tradition. It has been vigorously attacked on the score of its alleged inadequacy in social discipline and in equipping the young with the knowledge and skills which the community has a right to expect in the product of its schools. However, the graduates of schools influenced by this philosophy have stood up well by comparison with those of traditional schools as measured by achievement at the college level, and have shown a high degree of social competence in the broad sense of that term. On the whole, they have made an impressive showing in ability to think for themselves about the significant problems of social living. If these schools have been, in many instances, defective in respect to the development of self-discipline, it is fair to say that efforts are being made to correct the fault.

However, a second re-examination of the teaching process was induced by the impact of the social, political, and moral crises of the last fifteen years, which confronted education with problems of a new sort. Some of them are outside the scope of this document, but the issue of indoctrination has been freshly raised in a way that is definitely related to the problem we are attempting to analyze. In recent years, many educators of the progressive type have raised serious questions about the formula "not what to think, but how to think." The crucial question has been whether or not the schools should be content to let boys and girls grow up to think what they like about democracy. The sharpening of what is loosely called ideological conflict has created anxiety among educators who had set great store by open-mindedness as an attitude to be fostered. It is scarcely possible to reconcile the recent crusading literature on education for democracy

with the former insistence that definite "conditioning" was to be avoided. More and more it is coming to be demanded that the schools take sides in the battle between rival social philosophies and aim definitely at turning out young democrats.

This does not mean that the tide in public education is running in favor of indoctrination in the sense that a set of values or beliefs is to be presented to young minds for acceptance without question. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that educators of the progressive type are engaged in reformulating their educational philosophy on this wise: To be educated does not mean to have been taught what to think, but it does mean to have learned what to think *about* and to have acquired definite convictions with respect to values. And the more realistic students of education recognize that however important freedom of thought may be in a liberal democratic culture, society inevitably demands that its schools equip the young with a lively appreciation of their cultural heritage and prepare them to carry forward the main stream of the culture. In this sense the schools are, in the nature of the case, custodians of the culture and the main instrumentality for its perpetuation. Hence, it would appear that the controversy about whether education is transmissive or critical is in some sense artificial. Education must be both. It must equip the young not only to *pass* on the culture but to *pass on* the culture. Only an appreciative understanding of tradition makes possible a critical appraisal of it.

This issue in educational philosophy has been highlighted in the battle over the social studies program, to which reference has been made. Socially minded educators have defended the introduction of controversial social and economic questions at the appropriate age level on the ground that the students need to know what the issues are, to be guided in their analysis

of them in the light of the American tradition, and to have a sympathetic understanding of all honest proposals for their solution. In defending this position, they have no thought of indoctrination with one particular social philosophy. If they analyze for their students the issues of a political campaign, it is not for the purpose of instructing them as to how their parents should vote. At the same time, the very insistence on attention to fundamental issues constitutes pressure against a non-participating and neutral attitude. In such education there is an impulsive force toward action in the political arena. Indeed, all social education in the new pattern has this double character: it avoids partisanship on issues which divide the community, but it impels the citizen, young or old, to action upon conviction. Thus, he becomes the author of his own partisanship. To a considerable extent some religious schools have been following a similar course in the teaching of social ethics.

We have dwelt on this question concerning the nature of teaching in general because it is basic to a consideration of how the teaching of religion is to be understood. Strangely enough, whenever the possibility of introducing religious subject matter into the school program is suggested, it is inferred that what is proposed is a kind of indoctrination that has been increasingly disapproved in general educational practice. In the light of the foregoing discussion it appears that this inference is all of a piece with the resistance encountered in the social studies program. The place of religion in education is not easily defined, and many valid questions have been raised about it which require sober consideration. But we are impressed with the fact that the problem is usually misapprehended, even in otherwise thoughtful discussions of the subject. To assume that when religious subject matter is introduced into the schools the result is the adoption of a school theology is to beg the entire ques-

tion. Here the same assumption is made that critics of the social studies have made when they have confused the study of economic problems with anticapitalist indoctrination.

That there have been efforts to introduce sectarian teaching in the school curriculum and that some current proposals look in that direction is not to be denied. We shall return in another connection to contemporary practices of this sort. Our purpose at this point is to urge consideration by educators of the possibility of raising the ban on religious subject matter to the extent that the study of it can be guided as is the case today in those schools which most successfully direct the study of other material about which divergent views are recognized. Such a procedure, however, rests on one positive assumption, namely, that among the results which the community has a right to look for in the graduates of its schools is a positive attitude toward the values that religion represents in the culture.

V. SHALL THE SCHOOLS TEACH A COMMON CORE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF?

WE FULLY realize that the position just stated is at variance with the proposal currently put forward to abstract from the various faiths the common doctrines and make these the basis of religious instruction in the schools. This proposal is aimed at finding a nonsectarian basis for religious indoctrination. It requires serious scrutiny. To begin with, we think it objectionable from the religious point of view. Catholics, in particular, will object because of their traditional position that Christ established one true church to which all men are called. The notion of a common core suggests a watering-down of the several faiths to the point where common essentials appear. This might easily lead to a new sect — a public school sect — which would take its place alongside the existing faiths

and compete with them. The great religious bodies in America hold their respective faiths too seriously to admit of such a procedure on the part of the public schools.

Furthermore, it must be remembered that not only are there many persons who are outside the churches and synagogues but also that there are those who are actively opposed to their teachings. They have their claim on the schools as well as others. To attempt the formulation of a common theology to be used as the basis of instruction in the sense of indoctrination would be bitterly resented by many persons, some of whom are teachers and others of whom are members of boards of education.

Finally, such a proposal runs counter to the trend in educational philosophy which we have already sketched. We do not believe the schools should be asked to do in the religious realm what they have rejected in other fields. Religious educators themselves are divided on whether or not intellectual conviction may be properly secured through indoctrination. This method has many defenders. Nevertheless, the contrary view has won its way in public education.

Here, however, a problem arises which we must face frankly. It may be contended that the disavowal of indoctrination in the school for any particular set of religious beliefs is fatal to our previously stated position that the school has a responsibility for fostering appreciation of the religious elements in the culture. If there are in the community which supports the schools those who reject religion *in toto*, who believe it anachronistic and a deterrent to progress, by what right, one may ask, shall the school undertake to foster an interest in it through the study of religious institutions? If, on the other hand, religion be given a place in the school program because of the conspicuous place it holds in the life of the community, how, it may be asked, would the democratic principle

be violated by determining on a similar basis a minimum body of religious doctrine for which the school may stand?

The problem is fundamental. We have noted the tendency in educational practice to substitute guided inquiry for the proclamation of doctrine and, on the other hand, the newer tendency to fix in the minds of the young a set of values and attitudes with reference to the democratic way of life. The latter is insisted upon despite the fact that there are persons in the community who do not subscribe to the creed of democracy in any fundamental sense. For example, the schools are permitted to foster the concept of equality in spite of the fact that the principle of equality is notoriously violated in more than one phase of our national life. Admittedly, to force this principle upon some sections of the population would be to incur the danger of violence. Indeed, it may be plausibly maintained that there are more people in America who believe in God than there are people who believe in democracy as a way of life! There is much evidence to support that contention. But democracy is part of our cultural heritage, and in spite of all our denials of it we feel committed to the democratic ideal. So it is with our religious heritage. We who make this report believe that the American people are deeply, though not always articulately, conscious of a religious heritage to whose central values they want their children to be committed. We believe this is the reason for the renewed widespread concern for education in the field of religion.

This is something quite different from a desire to impose some particular orthodoxy on the schools. The fact is that the scientific method has laid hold so firmly on the modern mind that the teaching of any doctrine as ultimately true and beyond question is resisted. The conviction is widespread that this kind of indoctrination can be justified only within groups whose members are so convinced of its finality as to be willing to fasten it

on the minds of the young. It is noteworthy that even in churches which maintain the most rigid orthodoxy and which teach it in authoritarian fashion, the fact is recognized that belief cannot be coerced though it may be induced in a variety of ways. The American people as a whole are quite unwilling to accept the authority of the state to prescribe religious beliefs. It is safe to say that the continuing resistance to the introduction of religious matter into the schools is in large part due to the assumption that any such proposal really means the teaching of some particular religion — perhaps a synthetic one — as authoritative. If, in order to bring economics and political science into the schools through the social studies program it had been necessary to determine in advance "which economics to teach," the school program would have had to remain closed to that subject.

The substance of the matter is that contemporary society in America, placing a high value upon education, asks more and more of its schools in terms of curriculum scope and thoroughness, but distinctly less than formerly in terms of final pronouncements on anything. Until this characteristic of education in our time is fully appreciated, the situation must remain anomalous. There are those who think the school program has been too hospitable to newly developed fields of interest. To the modern-minded school administrator this complaint is likely to make little appeal, but it serves to emphasize the current trend. The criterion of acceptance in the curriculum is not universal agreement; rather it may be said that the presumption is in favor of inclusion in the school program of any area of interest that lends itself to objective study if a substantial portion of the constituency of the schools regards it as of vital concern. Educators have shown an impressive breadth of social vision in this respect. We suggest that a consistent adherence to the present-day philosophy of education and a responsible attitude toward

their leadership function call for a new and serious approach on the part of educators to the problem of the place to be given to religion in the school program.

VI. WILL TEACHING "SPIRITUAL VALUES" SUFFICE?

AN IMPRESSIVE attempt has been made recently to demonstrate the essential adequacy of public education in moral and spiritual terms without the introduction of specifically religious subject matter. The point is of basic importance. We think the controversy over this subject has been needlessly sharpened by a tendency on the part of spokesmen for religion to condemn our schools indiscriminately because of the exclusion of religion. This exclusion is by no means universal, and there is abundant evidence that no general hostility to religion exists among educators. Large numbers of school superintendents and teachers are active and devoted laymen, representing all the major faiths. There is excellent reason to believe that nowhere is the concern over the exclusion of religion more deeply felt than within the educational profession. Large numbers of educators find it hard to accept some of the contemporary arguments for the traditional educational dualism — the separation of the religious from the secular.

Moreover, the defense of the public schools on the ground of the spiritual values they foster is wholly justified if they are being attacked on that score. We in America believe that democracy is a spiritual ideal; that cooperation, mutual aid, self-discipline, kindness, courtesy, and the like are spiritual values. The discipline of the scientific method has a definitely ethical quality. It requires fidelity to truth, the subordination of private motives, the suppression of bias, active cooperation with colleagues in the work of investigation, and, at its best, the making available of the results for public

use.

Current attempts to defend the right of the public schools to develop spiritual values should not be necessary. We are not aware that the responsibility of the schools for fostering these ideals and developing corresponding attitudes is being challenged or that their achievements in these respects are being denied in any responsible quarter. If the schools are attacked on these grounds we heartily join in their defense. We would go farther and say that in many schools an attitude of religious reverence is fostered. Often, however, this is done in a hesitant and tentative way.

But to assume that spiritual values embody the full, valid content of religion is quite another matter. The words "spiritual" and "moral" denote the value-structure of life. Religion seeks personal identification with some ultimate source of values. It involves faith in the permanent validity and durability of these values. Religion has always supplied moral sanctions for men's actions. No person is fully educated who has not gained a knowledge of the faiths men live by. And unless the schools are content to leave one of the major areas of life unexplored, the specifically religious beliefs and aspirations of human beings must have attention.

This, however, is only a part of the matter. Religion is not only a faith to be believed but a life to be lived, which involves group as well as individual behavior. The man in the street knows that religion has something to do with church and synagogue. It is popular today to depreciate institutions. Yet without them, life would have no continuity and society would have no visible embodiment. Religion has, of course, its private and personal aspect, which is a precious possession. The right of the private conscience must be preserved. But, historically, religion has been profoundly social. It is associated with elemental needs of a social group. It expresses it-

self in ceremonial, in ritual and liturgy. Any adequate study of religion, therefore, includes the study of religious institutions.

In other fields of study this principle is clearly recognized. Educators long since discovered that economics could not be studied merely as a body of doctrine. It has been found necessary to include the story of corporations, banks, labor unions, trade associations, and cooperatives. The study of politics would be shallow indeed if it did not concern itself with the institutions of government and the actual functioning of political parties. It would not occur to anyone that because economic and political values are taught in the schools, the study of the institutions to which they give rise can be ignored. How can public education discharge its full obligation to interpret the culture if it excludes the study of religious institutions?

VII. EDUCATION THAT NEGATES RELIGION

AT THIS POINT we must give voice to a grievous concern on the part of many religious leaders and many educators as well. Much of the literature opposing any religious teaching in the schools has implicit in it, if not explicit, a definite philosophy that is, in effect, sectarian. And in many institutions of higher education and of teacher education, a system of philosophy is taught — in the traditional indoctrinational sense of that word — which negates the religious beliefs of millions of Americans. To present such a system of philosophy with the emphatic endorsement of the instructor while at the same time contending that religion must be kept out of public education is strangely inconsistent. For a naturalistic philosophy involves religious assumptions quite as much as a supernaturalistic philosophy. To call supernaturalism a religion and naturalism a philosophy and on that basis to exclude the one and embrace the other is, we think, a form of

self-deception. Again, it should be emphasized that a supernaturalist world view is only partially representative of American religious philosophy. There are many religious leaders who find it unacceptable because they hold to a unitary view of all reality. But, to vast numbers of Americans, the denial of the supernatural in the classroom is a negation of their faith and to make such denial is to bring religion into the schools with a vengeance. If this unilateral exercise of "liberty" in a publicly supported institution is insisted on, only trouble can be expected. Religious people have every right to resent and resist an attack on their faith made in the name of academic scholarship.

There is a disquieting feeling abroad that the most grievous infraction of the American principle by which sectarian teaching is excluded from tax-supported institutions is coming from dogmatic educators who identify their own philosophy with ultimate truth. The natural outcome of an unwarranted exercise of freedom is to have it taken away. If academic freedom of testimony to one's own conviction should be restrained, American life and education would be immeasurably poorer. But we could not discharge the responsibility placed upon us in the preparation of this document if we did not declare our conviction that negative religious dogmatism in the schools is as un-American as positive religious dogmatism. Indeed, in the long run it may be more vigorously resented.

VIII. DIVERSITY OF EXISTING POLICIES AND PRACTICES

UP TO THIS point we have not questioned, except by occasional inference, the assumption underlying most discussions of this subject that there is a definite American pattern of school relationships which prescribes the status of religion with reference to education. It is of no small moment, however, that existing practices in American communities are anything but uniform and do not, in

themselves, define a broad policy. Any proposal put forward that involves giving some place to religion in the school program is regarded as a departure from a precedent which might be expressed by the slogan, "No religion in the schools." But an examination of the facts discloses no such condition. In fact, no aspect of the American situation is stranger than the disparity between what we say and what we do.

This in itself is not necessarily an indictment. If there were no reason for questioning the principle of secularization, it might well be maintained that departures from it in practice are but evidences of imperfection and that the goal is to keep them at a minimum. But, when an alleged precedent is appealed to as sanctioning the principle, the case is different. Let us consider some of the diverse practices.

Bible reading in the schools is an illuminating illustration. The number of states in which the reading of the Bible is required almost exactly equals the number in which it is prohibited! Together they account for about half the states in the union. Thus, in a nation recognizing a common set of political principles, diverse practices are authorized. Where Bible reading is required or permitted, it is regularized formally by the stipulation that there is to be no instruction connected with it. Thus, the principle is formally preserved, while a concession is made to a demand that *some* religion shall be incorporated in the school program. As to the net spiritual result there is much skepticism among educators, but that question is not considered here. The conspicuous lack of consistency is what we are emphasizing.

Furthermore in some states more explicit forms of worship are prescribed, and in innumerable instances simple services of worship are conducted with evident community approval. Again, school credit is allowed in many states for Bible study conducted outside the school. There are

also school systems in which religious classes are conducted in the school, as part of the school program, by cooperation with church bodies, the cost being defrayed by private contributions. On the other hand, week-day religious education conducted under the auspices of churches and synagogues requiring only a minimum of school cooperation, a system which has achieved a high degree of public approval, encounters in some quarters serious opposition as an infraction of sound principle.

The most conspicuous example of religious observances in the schools is found, of course, in the annual festivals such as Christmas, Thanksgiving and, latterly, the Jewish Hanukkah, in which the religious elements are undisguised.

The nearest approximation to uniformity is probably in the matter of restricting public education funds to public school use. But even here practice ranges from strict observance of this rule to furnishing textbooks out of public funds to pupils in parochial schools and providing free transportation for them.

It can hardly be doubted that these divergent practices which demonstrate the absence of an American policy with reference to religion and public education are themselves profoundly revealing as to the confused state of mind of the American people. Those who are irked by any raising of the issue seem to be trying to find a uniformity that does not exist. And it is lacking because there is wide awareness of a problem that has not been solved.

The situation, however, may be interpreted as indicating that there is in fact an "American way" in education with respect to religion, namely state and local control, with freedom to experiment. This is as it should be. Public education in this country is a function of the states, whose policy is to delegate control in large part to the local community. The advantages resulting from this decentralization are enormous. But with respect to religion the exercise of local initiative is hampered

by fear of infringing some national policy or precedent concerning the relation between church and state. There is no such explicit precedent. We should like to see more trust imposed in the people to manage their schools, under prescribed academic standards, in their own way.

IX. THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

THE CONFUSION to which we have referred is further evidenced in the failure to give clear and definite meaning to the doctrine of separation of church and state outside the educational field. The confusion in education is part of a larger confusion. We have already testified to our concern that the control of public education be kept in public hands. That in itself evidences our conviction that the separation doctrine has a hard core of reality and is not to be disparaged. But it is essential that it be understood not as an absolute — which it tends to become in much current controversial literature — but as a broad principle of varying application, the essence of which is the preservation of maximum religious freedom. In particular, it is at the moment quite as important to note what, in actual practice, the separation of church and state does not mean as well as what it does mean.

The first point to observe is that even separation in terms of control is a relative conception. There is no such thing as a completely free church in a free state. The church is subject to the state in a variety of ways. It must obey building codes and fire laws. It must pay taxes on those portions of its property not used for purposes defined by statute as exempt. It must pay its debts. It even depends on the state for its legal incorporation, without which it would be powerless to hold and administer property. All along the line religious freedom, like other kinds of freedom, encounters limitations. Separation from the state is, therefore, a relative matter. This is not to lessen its importance; on the contrary, it is the more

important to study its proper implications.

By the same token, the converse of this relationship — the activities of organized religion which affect the state — cannot be brought under a rule of thumb. Here, to be sure, there is greater divergence of opinion. Organized religion, composed, be it remembered, of people who are at the same time citizens having in common with other citizens a stake in the integrity of public policy, tends to be socially conservative. Some religious bodies have manifested a great reluctance to engage in activities directed toward influencing public policy on the ground that the church should avoid all semblance of political action. Even here, however, notable exceptions occur, as in the case of the prohibition movement, and also in respect to local campaigns for clean government. Churches and synagogues have taken an increasingly active interest in the political aspects of international relations. There is a trend, as previously noted, toward greater recognition of the propriety of nonpartisan political action on the part of religious bodies. This appears to be true of public opinion generally as well as of opinion within the churches.

A curious paradox which should be noted in passing is the applause accorded exceptionally liberal pronouncements by religious bodies on social and political issues by persons who continually warn of the danger of any departure from the principle of separation of church and state. It is evidence that even these persons have a broader conception of the matter than their slogans suggest. As in many other controversial matters there is probably wider fundamental agreement on this issue than appears in heated debate.

Be that as it may, religion in America today plays a considerable role in governmental affairs. This is true not only in respect to the kind of activity above referred to, but even more conspicuously in respect to specific religious services. The employment of chaplains in the armed forces at government expense is at present

the most noteworthy example. The maintenance of religious services in public hospitals and prisons, the use of the Bible in administering oaths, the issuance of religious proclamations and call to prayer by presidents or governors — these and other practices indicate how far short of a definite prescriptive rule of practice the separation of church and state is in America.

An important consideration is the very great variety of local conditions that affect policy. The crux of the matter is that while the commitment against sectarian teaching in the schools remains strong, what is actually sectarian is beyond legal definition and subject to *de facto* determination. Anything of a religious character that inflames one portion of the populace against another can readily be brought under the sectarian category. If no disturbance results, the probability is that a vigorously sponsored innovation will "get by." Democracy often works that way though it is undeniably hazardous. Many crimes against liberty have been committed with the shameful approval of the populace. That is why we value the Bill of Rights, maintained by a high central authority immune to local corruption.

We do not suggest that those who regard the introduction of religious subject matter into the schools as inherently destructive of freedom should abate their opposition in deference to a principle of local control. We do urge, first, the abandonment of an appeal to nonexistent precedent in support of an extreme secularist position; secondly, a frank facing of a problem that is all of a piece with the extension of democratic control of education and with the steady widening of the scope of the school program.

The core of meaning in the doctrine of separation of church and state we believe to be this: there shall be no ecclesiastical control of political functions; there shall be no political dictation in the ecclesiastical sphere except as public safety or

public morals may require it. This doctrine may not be invoked to prevent public education from determining on its merits the question how the religious phases of the culture shall be recognized in the school program.

X. WEEKDAY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

WE HAVE referred to the practice of releasing school pupils for attendance at classes in religious education held either in nearby churches and synagogues or in the public schools, as one of the ways in which communities have sought to compensate for the omission of the teaching of religion from the school program. It is important to understand the relation of this plan to the broad problem we are attempting to analyze. The recent rapid growth of the movement is one of the evidences of public concern for religious education. Furthermore, the fact that it involves a certain amount of cooperation on the part of the school administration indicates that in the communities where the plan is in operation there is recognition of an obligation on the part of public education to facilitate the conduct of religious education. This has an important bearing on the question discussed earlier of the responsibility of the community as a whole to promote an appreciation of the religious phases of the culture. No detailed discussion of the released-time movement is attempted here, but certain generalizations seem warranted.

First, weekday religious education is a community enterprise through which parents may take the initiative in getting more adequate religious education for their children in their own faith. It provides an opportunity for churches and synagogues to effect an extension of their own educational programs with public school cooperation. As such it makes no pretension to be nonsectarian, as we have used that term, but is an effort to strengthen the work of the church and the synagogue in their own fields. It is not to be confused with the function of

the public school. Its indefinite extension would not of itself modify the conception we are here defending of the scope and adequacy of the public school program. At most it would be complementary. To the extent that the released-time plan increases the effectiveness of organized religion in the nurturing of its youth, this cannot fail to react on the school situation, but it would serve to emphasize further the educational dualism that secularization of the schools has brought about.

Secondly, we think no essential principle is violated by the released-time plan, as long as it is operated within the limits of the school laws of the state and under the principle of local option in matters not specifically covered by the law.

Deserving of further comment, because of its controversial character, is the question whether or not such released-time classes should be held within the public school building. The following considerations are advanced; On the side of opposition are those who maintain that such a practice involves the use of public funds for sectarian purposes; that it is undemocratic because it separates pupils into sectarian groups within the school; and that it lays an unfair burden on school administrators to ask them to provide for giving children over to teachers not under their supervision while the pupils are still in their care. Those who favor the practice maintain that where use of public schoolrooms is necessary for the effective holding of released-time classes, granting such use is but a necessary part of the school's cooperation in a community plan for providing religious education; that separation into sectarian groups for religious instruction is but a recognition of sectarian divisions which already exist in the community and are known to every child; that this separation into sectarian groups may be used as a means of teaching positive appreciation of each other, that it is easier for school administrators to discharge their responsibilities when pupils remain in the school building than

it is when they are released to churches and synagogues which are often many blocks distant from the school. On the merits of these two positions the committee makes no attempt to pass judgment, insisting only that whatever plan is adopted represent the will and purpose of the community concerned, expressed through appropriate channels.

Finally, the appraisal of weekday religious education in terms of actual results is primarily the responsibility of those conducting it, not of the public schools. The community, however, has an obligation to determine whether its merits are such as to justify its maintenance as a joint enterprise within the community involving cooperation of the public schools and the churches and synagogues. This will involve scrutiny of standards as to teaching personnel, curriculum and equipment, as well as an appraisal of relationships between public and religious schools.

This whole matter of religious education on released time has attained such proportions that it calls for thorough study and evaluation. However, we repeat that the released-time program is not directly related to the problem with which this report is concerned. We are addressing ourselves to the responsibility of the schools in their own right, and in relation to their own program.

XI. THE BASIC RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WE HAVE sought up to this point to make clear the grounds of our conviction that the over-all situation with reference to religion and public education in America is not satisfactory and that the exclusion of religious subject matter which so largely prevails is neither required on grounds of public policy nor consistent with sound educational principles. Having put forward our view to this effect, we recognize an obligation to suggest possible developments in the school program that will be in line with the position we have developed.

The point of departure in the restudy of the curriculum from the viewpoint we have presented is the obligation of the schools to give the young an understanding of the culture and an appreciation of the ideals, values, and institutions which the culture cherishes. As has already been pointed out, appreciative study of the cultural heritage does not sanctify it. A better way to say this, perhaps, is that the capacity and the inclination to re-examine what is given in the inherited tradition are themselves among the most precious of our cultural possessions. Without them the social heritage would be unmanageable. But we hold no program of general education to be adequate that leaves any large area of human concern untouched.

What, then, is to be the goal of the study of religion in the schools, if there is to be such study? It is frequently said that teaching *about religion* is not teaching religion, and that the public school can make no contribution in this field because it is obliged to stop short of anything significant or worth while. In part this may be repeating an error that we pointed out earlier, namely, assuming that teaching in any field where there is sharp divergence of views means selecting one among alternative positions and "plugging" for it. Even so, to limit teaching to areas in which there is substantial agreement would leave education powerless at the cutting edge of a changing culture. The difficulty here would perhaps have been avoided if the term "study religion" had been used instead of the term "teach religion." Old habits of thought are hard to overcome even for educators.

But there is a sense in which the objection noted above is relevant and significant: the difference between acquiring information about a subject and having a meaningful learning experience is real and substantial. There is wide agreement, as we pointed out earlier, that significant learning is an active process. It culmi-

nates in "acceptance to act upon . . ." It is for this reason that we often hear it said that character, or religion, or democracy cannot be *taught*, but must be *caught*. We think it much more in line with experience to say that the "catching" of such qualities of life as are implied in such a statement is itself of the very stuff of the learning process and is at the heart of the educational enterprise. Indeed, this is implicit in the emphasis on activity in modern educational theory. But to recognize this aspect of learning makes the distinction between *learning about* and a complete *learning experience* very real and important. The current interest in religious education will not, and should not, be satisfied with acquiring a familiarity with religious history or even a familiarity with religion as empirical fact in community life. The position we are taking requires us to face this inadequacy of mere objective study. To do so, however, only serves to make explicit our conception of all wholesome education as induction into the life of one's world through continuous meaningful and rewarding participation. Where this is not going on, something less than an adequate education is occurring. In its broadest sense religious education implies induction into the life of a religious community, commonly represented by the church and synagogue, which necessarily stand apart from the public schools.

How, then, can we expect much of the school in the sphere of religious education? Those who express skepticism at this point are raising no superficial issue. Yet we think the answer is not far to seek.

To begin with, even the most fundamental learning experience includes "learning about," and often begins in that way. One cannot enter into a friendship, or enroll in a school, or join a church without preliminary acquaintance. The first step in the acceptance of anything new is orientation toward it. Due to the secularization of life and education, contacts

with religious life and activity tend to become less frequent and a vast ignorance of religion prevails. If society is really concerned, as we believe it increasingly is today, that religion should have a more important place in the lives of its youth, a first step is to break through the wall of ignorance about religion and to increase the number of contacts with it. Let it be freely acknowledged that this involves the basic assumption made earlier that religious activity is a normal aspect of life, just as truly as vocational work and political activity are normal aspects of it. Not any and all religious activity, to be sure; but neither can any and all vocational or political activity be given social approval and be encouraged in the school. The first obligation of the school with reference to religion is, we believe, to facilitate intelligent contact with it as it has developed in our culture and among our institutions. The many attempts that have been made in various states to overcome the effect of secularization bear testimony to a popular demand that the schools shall not ignore the claims of religion upon human life.

It is a grave mistake to suppose that the public school, holding as it does in so large part the power to determine the scope of intelligent interest and concern on the part of youth, can be neutral in this matter. The failure to play a part in acquainting the young with the role of religion in the culture while at the same time accepting such responsibility with reference to other phases of the culture, is to be unneutral — to weight the scales against any concern with religion.

We wish to stress as strongly as we can the belief that no education culminates worthily that does not result in convictions that will guide people in the use of their intelligence, their acquired knowledge, and the resources supplied by their environment. All education involves choices, both on the part of the educator and on the part of the student. Democratic education maximizes the role of student choices as free decisions. But freedom in a real world requires knowledge of the assets and liabilities of the cul-

ture in accordance with the broadest consensus of what the good life is. It also requires the capacity to think, judge, and act decisively. It is not the business of public education to secure adherence to any particular religious system or philosophic outlook. But we believe it is the business of public education to impel the young toward a vigorous, decisive personal reaction to the challenge of religion.

It is often complained that the younger generation today lacks convictions. We are in no position to make a quantitative judgment on this point. But to the extent that it is true, it is an indictment of education — not because young people have not been told what to believe but because they have not been irresistibly challenged to make up their minds, to achieve a faith, and to throw the weight of their lives into the struggle to vindicate it. Public education may not propagate religious dogmas or arbitrate religious differences. But if it does not impel students toward the achievement of a faith and to that end create a sensitive awareness of the religious resources upon which men have learned to rely, it is less than education ought to be.

XII. ACTUAL POSSIBILITIES WITHIN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WE COME now to the crucial question: What can be done in the way of religious study within the public schools? An obvious answer, in the light of some of the facts already presented, would be that in certain communities almost anything seems to be possible. With respect to such situations we wish to say frankly that we hold no brief for every practice that now obtains. We have tried to make clear the dangers to religious liberty involved in sectarian indoctrination in the public schools even where community sentiment endorses it. We recognize that the principle of local control involves the hazard that unwise things will be done. Democracy always involves this hazard. But we are addressing ourselves to the problem that arises in the more typical American communities where the population is religiously heterogeneous and where sectarian differences are marked.

The first thing to be said is that in all probability there are communities where the situation is so rigid that no innovation could be attempted without a degree of friction that would nullify any gain to be experienced from it. Advances in public policy have to come about by experimentation where the community is ready for it. What we here suggest is based on the belief that where the will exists it will prove feasible to solve the problem created by secularism through cooperative effort. Only those, of course, who recognize the problem will be interested in any proposal whatever.

The logic of the situation points to the social studies as furnishing the most conspicuous opportunity within the schools below the college level. We are fully aware that some social studies textbooks touch upon certain aspects of religious history and religious groups, but they deal with religion in an inadequate, if not in a very superficial, way. Serious attention needs to be given by textbook writers to this deficiency.

In the study of the various phases of community life — government, markets, industry, labor, welfare, and the like — there would seem to be no tenable reason for the omission of contemporary religious institutions and practices. Here is an opportunity for a typical social studies project involving observation, interview, and research, and giving first-hand contact with the religious life of the community on the basis of free inquiry. It will in no way commit the school to a particular sectarian position. There are school systems which have used this method, but illustrations of it seem to be very few. It has the advantage of offering pupil initiative and affords an opportunity for independent study. It is not our purpose in this report to propose specific methods to be employed in a social studies program. However, we think that there are large possibilities in it which might be further explored.

Some religious groups do not welcome exposure of their children to the ideas, beliefs, and practices of other faiths. However, they must admit that the study of contemporary religious institutions is a prac-

tical method for bringing the churches and synagogues in the community to the attention of millions of public school children who do not participate in the activities of the churches and synagogues. All seek an increase in friendly attitudes and a lessening of prejudice. There can be no progress in any of these respects except through closer acquaintanceship. We believe that this should begin as soon as students are capable of understanding the differences and will not be confused by them. It must be characterized by mutuality to the extent of a genuine desire to know one's neighbors better, to understand what they believe and why. This does not mean that a boy or girl of one faith is expected to modify his or her religious convictions. It means only that there is a will to understand. If we in America are seriously bent on reducing group prejudices, we cannot ignore the possibilities of creating good will through this kind of educational experience.

If members of any religious group in a community are not prepared to enter into such a program of mutual inquiry, we believe it will be amply rewarding to those who are. So far as we know, all religious groups welcome the study of their own faith by others. Let cooperation go as far as it will. Here, as in all matters where religious education is involved, the right of non-participation must be held inviolate.

The study of the religious classics, not in special religious classes, but in the regular literature program has not been entirely neglected, but provision for it is all too inadequate. The English classics are recognized as carriers of our cultural heritage. It can hardly be contested that the Bible is second to none among the books that have influenced the thought and ideals of the Western world. There is much evidence that the study of the Bible as a unique piece of religious literature, conducted with at least as much respect as is given to the great secular classics, and devoid of arbitrary interpretations to the same extent that we expect in connection with the latter, could be carried on without offense to any section of the community. We believe that teachers

of English literature in large numbers would welcome the opportunity to make greater use of biblical literature in their programs — and to prepare themselves accordingly.

We suggest that a careful study be made by teachers of English literature, assisted by Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish scholars, of the materials required to give students a reasonable degree of familiarity with our great religious classics. It is to be expected that the amount of time given to this portion of our literary heritage will vary widely among school systems. Guidance will be needed so that the best use may be made of available time. A commission constituted as above suggested would also be in a position to recommend suitable provision in the teacher-education program for this extension of the literature curriculum. We regard these suggestions as in line with some of the best current educational thought concerning the content of a liberal education.

If the Bible as such is to be studied in the school, the question arises at once: What account is to be taken of a religious objection to reading or listening to the text of a version of the Bible that is not approved by ecclesiastical authority? The problem is not merely one of individual conscientious objection, but of official objection. Full account should be taken of it. To say this, of course, implies disapproval of the legal requirement existing in many states that the Protestant Bible be read in school assemblies. It is a fair question whether such a legal requirement is not a violation of religious liberty. One way in which the situation has been met is to encourage each student to use the version which is approved by his communion. To some extent this is being done. Another way is to use secondary biblical sources — biblical narratives retold. From a literary point of view this is less desirable, but it is nevertheless a method by which familiarity with the content of a religious classic may be acquired.

When study of the Bible is mentioned as appropriate for the public school, the question is often asked, Why not the Koran, and the Chinese, and Indian classics? The suggestion is in order provided we keep our

sense of proportion. No educator with any knowledge of cultural anthropology would expect Egyptians or Turks to give as much attention to the Bible as to the Koran, or the Chinese as much as to Confucius, or the Hindus as much as to the Bhagavad-Gita. Our youth stand in the tradition of the Western world, and there is every reason why they should know best their own classics. A better case can be made for the study of portions of the rich store of Talmudic literature which contributes much to an understanding of the Old Testament. To the extent that the study of other religious classics can be a vehicle of intercultural understanding and good will it might well find a place at appropriate age levels.

It should not be necessary to offer here a complete inventory of possibilities to be explored for giving attention to religion in proportion to its place in the culture. Mention may be made, however, of history, sociology, psychology, economics, philosophy, literature, music, and the fine arts. In part this list is relevant only to the higher education level, where, as we shall point out in a later section, the demonstrated possibilities of religious study in tax-supported institutions are much broader than at lower levels. In the study of music and the fine arts probably much more has been accomplished on the elementary and secondary levels than in any other field toward introducing religious subject matter, for the simple reason that it has been impossible to ignore it. This should be instructive all along the line. It suggests the irrelevance of much of the argument directed against religious subject matter as too controversial to touch. Religious art is full of dogmatic implications, but we have not heard it complained of as a cause of sectarian strife in the schools.

In history, in the sciences, and in philosophy, religion comes into the picture in ways that may indeed give rise to concern if we take counsel with our fears rather than our courage. Here the shoe will often be on the other foot; for much that has gone by the name "religion," as we have already pointed out, has been a reactionary force. But if

we are serious about bringing religious subject matter into the schools, we must be ready to face the consequences of objective study of the religious phases of these various disciplines. It is a disservice to religion to oppose such study when it is competently guided by men and women who themselves have an appreciation of the role of religion in human life.

Certainly, on the higher educational level there would seem to be little reason for hesitancy on the part of religious leaders to assent to what is here suggested, in view of the greater maturity of the students and the widespread antireligious indoctrination to which we referred earlier. A deliberate and competent attempt to deal adequately with religion in history and science classrooms would tend to eliminate the one-sided and partisan teaching in a number of departments of which complaint is so justly made.

Let there be no misapprehension here. We want no abridgment of liberty. The competent scholar must be free to express his beliefs and his doubts in his field of specialization. But he has no right to give a spurious finality to his own views on religion by exploiting his academic prestige. In the long run fairness and adherence to sound educational practice do not curtail freedom, but enhance it.

In this discussion we have suggested nothing in the way of formal study of religion. In general, we think this is appropriate in public education chiefly on the higher level, and it will be discussed later. Indeed, the reference made to specific disciplines in the foregoing paragraphs does not imply that they should be taught as formal "subjects." In respect to curriculum theory we are not here concerned with controversies over the way subject matter is organized for study, but, so far as the present inquiry is concerned, we believe that a total orientation toward religion as part of the culture is better accomplished if religion is not abstracted from those fields of study, however designated in the curriculum, of which it is a part.

It is of the essence of our position that religion is inseparably bound up with the culture as a whole. Some religious groups, notably the Catholics, aim to achieve this synthesis in their parochial schools! They insist that the doctrines of religion be integrated with every subject in the school curriculum. To confine the teaching of religion to separate "religious courses" tends toward the very secularization we have argued against — the splitting-off of religion from the rest of life.

On the other hand, the essence of the secularist contention with reference to education, whether put forward by ardent churchmen or by persons who have no sympathy with religion, is that religion and public education belong apart. When, therefore, antisecularists advocate putting into the school curriculum separate courses in religion, which would in the nature of the case be elective, they may be perpetuating the secularist pattern by which religious subject matter is separate from everything else. The systematic study of religious history, of comparative religion, and even of religious doctrines may fit very well into the elective program of a state university, but even there it is no substitute for the study of the religious phases of the major academic disciplines.

XIII. THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER EDUCATION

THE IMPORTANCE of the teacher in the difficult task of relating religion and education cannot be overemphasized. Fortunately, there is already in the public schools a substantial nucleus of teaching and administrative personnel who are well informed in the field of religion and who live and teach on the basis of fundamental religious assumptions. They are to be found among all religious groups and could be trusted to teach religion without prejudice and sectarianism. The fact that the number of such informed teachers is tragically limited is a hazard which must be overcome if the task is to be accomplished. Two dangers loom large in the process: first, the danger in-

herent in the fact that there are large numbers of teachers who are not adequately informed in matters of religion and who lack interest in the study of religion; and second, the danger arising from the fact that teachers with deep religious convictions are tempted to teach religion along sectarian lines. These dangers are not insurmountable and do not represent vulnerabilities which cannot be overcome by good teacher education.

The answer to the question where the teachers are coming from is therefore obvious. They will have to come from the same sources from which we get teachers now, or from which we expect to get them in the coming years. This is not to exclude the possibility that in school systems which now provide for the conduct of religious classes within the school under church auspices, or in released-time educational plans, teachers may be found who can qualify as public school teachers quite as well as many who are now on the school payrolls. In many cases this is undoubtedly true. But probably most of the teachers thus employed would need further training in order to fit into the kind of program we have sketched, for it cannot be too strongly emphasized that this program is not something to be *added on* to the school curriculum, but rather something to be integrated with it. By and large, the task we have in mind, certainly below the college level, is one for which the teacher-education institutions of the country will have to prepare the larger part of the leadership if the task is to be done.

This does not mean, of course, that a wholly new corps of teachers must be trained for the work described. As already stated, there is good reason to believe that large numbers of our teachers would welcome the opportunity to broaden their equipment in order that the departments of study for which they are responsible may be correspondingly enriched. If the general point of view of this report is accepted, it will be evident

that we are now failing to tap a substantial resource in educational leadership — a resource that goes unrecognized so long as we think of religious education as separate from every other kind.

New ventures in education have to be undertaken by coordinating teacher-education programs with local experiment and demonstration. Neither the teachers college nor the local school community can pioneer alone. It is probably safe to say that the readiness of school boards, administrators, and teachers to experiment is the best stimulus to new departures in the teachers colleges. On the other hand, demonstrations carried on by the latter have a potent effect in instigating community action. There is evidence today of an awakened interest on the part of school administrators in the problem we have been presenting.

In institutions where departments of religious education are maintained for the purpose of training professional workers in the religious field, there is already a base of operation. Here courses and workshops of a service type can be conducted by staff members who are regularly engaged with professional courses, with a view to giving members of the student body a background in religious ideas and religious history. This is not an innovation; it has been done with some measure of success. It requires little imagination to see the possibilities of further development through planned study for teachers of English and the social sciences who desire to work along the lines we have suggested.

In general, a department of religious education can probably function best by having on the staff members of different religious groups. It is hardly possible to do justice to all the elements of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, which must be understood in order to discover the religious roots of Western culture, by an exclusively Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish approach. Cooperative study is not only more productive of scholarship; it is a

great solvent of prejudice.

It should not be necessary to say that all ideas of carrying through such developments as a crusade should be nipped in the bud. The task we have outlined is not one to be accomplished in any such fashion. Education cannot be forced. The equipment of teachers for the work they are now doing is a process that has undergone slow evolution. The profession on the whole tends to be conservative, though less so, probably, than the communities that many teachers serve. But the broadening of the school program has been, nevertheless, an impressive phenomenon. We believe there is a readiness, largely unsuspected, on the part of teachers to follow wise leadership on the part of the teacher-education institutions in the religious field.

XIV. RELIGION AND EDUCATION AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL

WHILE THE contemporary concern over the relation of religion and education focuses mainly on the public schools, the broader educational approach to the systematic study of religious subject matter forbids the exclusion of higher institutions from consideration. In the first place, any serious attempt to introduce religious content into the public school curriculum depends in large part, as has been indicated, upon a type of teacher education which has oriented prospective teachers to our great religious heritage. In the second place, in spite of clearly defined differences, there are striking similarities between the situation in our publicly controlled colleges and universities and that in public educational institutions in general. In the first place, the historical record of higher education is highly illuminating in relation to the problem as a whole.

The differences between public higher education and elementary and secondary education are very important, and it might be well to catalogue some of them at the beginning of this discussion. The

maturity of college students is greater, and, it may be argued with some logic, the danger of religious indoctrination is less. These more mature students may be considered either to have formed their religious beliefs or to be at a stage where their critical judgment will enable them to insist upon more than a one-sided presentation of the subject. Moreover, the college community is more coherent and self-contained. Its activities are not objects of constant public concern, and the disconcerting pains of intellectual growth and development are not taken home daily to parents. In brief, to a considerable extent the colleges and universities absorb their own shocks. These and other factors tend to make the problem of developing the implicit relation of religion to education in the colleges much simpler than in institutions below the college level.

There is a long tradition in this country of religious orientation at the level of higher education. The early colleges were founded and supported by the churches. They served as the agents of culture and of religion on a wide frontier. Because of the difficulties of transportation, denominational rivalry, and the American principle of universal education, there was a conscious decentralization of educational facilities and, therefore, a multiplication of colleges. In many respects the colleges and churches cooperated to meet what they called the "spiritual necessities" of a new country. They did more than that; they played an important part in the formation and perpetuation of the secular elements as well as the religious elements of the culture. Thus, religion and education joined hands, and together they traversed and conquered a continent.

These frontier church-related colleges, modeled after those of the East, set the pattern for education at the higher level for many decades. Even those institutions which have subsequently severed all legal connection with religious bodies frequently preserve a hospitable attitude to-

ward things of the spirit. While the seed of publicly controlled higher education was sown during the colonial period, it was the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary periods, as contrasted with the colonial era, that saw the rise of the state-university movement. However, these new institutions had yet to make their case with the American people. The movement lost ground around the turn of the century due to a resurgence of religious influences, but was positively assured of its place following the passage of the Morrill Act of 1862. Nevertheless, in the process of growing up, public higher education was destined to be influenced by religion beyond the expectations of its most sanguine prophets.

This historical perspective will help to explain why the factors that brought about the secularization of public education at the elementary and secondary level were less significant at the higher level. Moreover, churches and synagogues have continued to exercise a large measure of responsibility for organizing and maintaining religious interest on the campus. College religious associations have had a recognized place on practically all campuses. Whatever the state regulations regarding the teaching of religion may have been, there has been little disposition to question the propriety of religious interests and activities. They have had official encouragement in many instances and at least official tolerance in the rest.

Let us not hastily assume, however, that the relations between education and religion at the college level are satisfactory. To be sure, custom and differences previously noted make it somewhat easier at the higher level to expose students to the religious elements in the cultural tradition and to the religious values which many hold as basic to a tenable philosophy of life. Nevertheless, the tide of secularization which has been pronounced throughout the whole of life in this century has engulfed some of the erstwhile academic strongholds of religion. The disintegra-

tion of the religious outlook has been due in part to the increasing emphasis on the intellect and the things of the intellect as the primary concern of the college. The increase of knowledge in the nineteenth century, the establishment of the free elective system, the influence of the German universities, the demand of an increasingly complex society for technical experts — all conspired to focus attention upon the importance of imparting knowledge and upon "training." In so far as these factors represented the growing-up of American institutions of higher learning, they are to be viewed with satisfaction. But it must be noted that the shift in interest and emphasis supported, without design, the secularist trend.

Many of the extreme secularists of this generation are to be found on college and university faculties; for within that large and influential group, much of the scientific work and most of the reflective thinking about science are done. While we have maintained that there is no necessary conflict between religion and science, we have also argued that what we believe to be a misinterpretation of the role and significance of science has given a major impulse to the development of a secularist philosophy. The significant point here is that the issue over the scope and adequacy of science and its relation to religious faith has had its major battleground on the campus. This is important, for the impact of the secular disciplines on religious thought at the higher and graduate levels reverberates throughout the whole educational system.

No thoughtful person would question for a moment either the serious purpose or the significant results of science. It has made such magnificent progress in expanding our knowledge of the universe and in giving us control over the forces of nature that its prestige is unchallenged. Too many of its devotees, however, have been blinded by its very glory into making quite unwarranted claims for it. We are told, for example, that the scientific

method is the only avenue through which values may be apprehended. We are sometimes informed that only the objects with which science deals are real, and that all else is superstition inherited from a pre-scientific age. This is a wholly untenable position. The moral values or ends by which men guide their lives cannot be verified by the scientific method, with its appeal to facts as the corroboration of previously framed hypotheses or its reliance upon the statistical and mathematical approach to the description of phenomena. Religion involves a concern for ultimate truth and a devotion to ultimate ends that man has no facilities for validating, in a factual or strictly empirical sense, either in the laboratory or elsewhere. This qualitative difference between religion and science is recognized by eminent scientists, as well as by philosophers.

Even the scientific enthusiast, who tries to bring all human experience under his laboratory categories, acts in many of the most significant areas of his life with a minimum of guidance from his scientific store of knowledge and a maximum of dependence on his moral impulses. The distinction to be noted is not between scientists and men of faith, but between scientists as such and scientists as men. Obviously, both the scientific urge and the moral springs of action are essential. Action without past experience is blind, but action without moral imperatives is below the human level.

Nevertheless, there have been many who were all too ready to claim for science a monopoly on human wisdom. The disease of "scientism" has been widespread in academic circles. The scientific method, developed in the field of natural science, has been applied to social studies where, to be sure, it is applicable, though limited with respect to quantitative measurement. But it has also been introduced into the humanities, where its application is by no means clear and where it has confused the issues. It has made curious beings of many college teachers who, because of their pro-

fession of scientific objectivity, dare not express a conviction. It has been said that in the realm of values they were neutral between right and wrong. They have tended to regard religion as purely a private matter, consisting chiefly of a set of individual beliefs — or aberrations. This tendency to look upon religion merely as an individual concern we have already seen to be one of the evils of the secular age. The higher learning in America has developed a broad urbanity, an all-engulfing tolerance, which finds it easy to be hospitable to everything except conviction — and genuine conviction, which must not be confused with intolerance, is one of the crying needs of our age.

It should be noted that a wide variety of conditions exists in tax-supported higher institutions. It is, therefore, especially important not to apply a common stereotype to all campuses in this matter. In actual practice two general patterns appear, one putting the responsibility for religious initiative and action on religious bodies and agencies whose activities are extra-curricular, and the other centering it in the administration and the faculty. An ideal arrangement would preserve the voluntary, extra-curricular aspect, while promoting the official responsibility. At the present time it is all too common for the administration to point to the various religious groups and agencies with the belief that provision for religion is adequately made. There is no substitute for official concern, and no agency will be so effective as a body of men and women on the faculty who care about the ultimate ends of life and who, in class and out, are prepared to stand up and be counted.

Broadly speaking, we believe in the same principle of divided responsibility for the college and university which we advocate on the lower age levels. The educational institution should take responsibility for the adequate study of religious institutions, history of religion, and in particular the relation of religion to world-order, not merely in isolated courses but as aspects of a human institution. It should also provide op-

portunities for worship services. The cultivation of particular religious traditions and their conscious promotion are the task of the church or synagogue, working in close association with voluntary campus organizations. In addition to formal instruction, the teacher has an opportunity to make his influence felt in the classroom, in the dormitories, and on the playing fields. Colleges and universities should encourage members of their faculties to participate in this kind of informal education.

Religion at its best has two major aspects: on the one hand it thrusts outward, tending to universality; on the other hand, it individuates, developing intensively in particular forms. Its perennial problem is to prevent the universalistic strain from being merely a weak diffusion, and to prevent the individuating tendency from becoming exclusive. Because religion brings into close association both those concerned with the ultimate ends of life and those devoted to science, the institutions of higher education have a special mission to fulfill. Because they have responsibility for the young men and women who seek to become educated human beings, they have a special task to perform respecting the total culture. While there are encouraging features in many colleges and universities, it remains true that an indigenous and authentic concern on the part of the institution to overcome religious illiteracy, to rediscover the religious roots of culture, and to help students to develop a religious philosophy of life by which they may live, indeed, has not yet developed.

XV. THE SCHOOL, THE CHURCH, AND THE HOME

BECAUSE IT IS often contended that the effort to introduce the study of religion in the schools is at bottom an attempt to create an alibi for the church, the distinction between the functions of the two institutions in this connection needs emphasis. It is no part of our intention to make the one carry the burden of the other. On the contrary, we see in the suggested program a means of enriching both. If attention to religion as an aspect of the common life were not, as

we see it, fully warranted on educational grounds, quite apart from its effect on our religious institutions, this report would never have been written. On the other hand, if we did not believe that organized religion stands to gain by the developments we propose, we should have less confidence in the effectiveness of our appeal.

To begin with, the church and synagogue, like all other institutions, are dependent on the school for the basic educational equipment of the people they serve. The claims of business, industry, labor, and the professions upon the schools are freely recognized. To be sure, they have to be kept in balance. But to the extent that the schools have failed to lay an adequate foundation for vocational work, they have heard from those elements of the community most concerned. The present controversy over vocational education is a striking illustration. The new interest in work experience is a result of the impact of the world of work upon the world of education. This is as it should be. No group, no institution, may demand special favors of the schools, but every kind of organized interest and activity that has broad community sanction may properly expect that the schools shall not be unmindful of the phase of human interest and concern which it represents. Community demands on the schools, which from time to time bring about adaptation of the curriculum, rest on this principle.

What stake, then, have the church and synagogue, as such, in the school program? Simply this: that youth should be made appreciatively aware of those aspects of individual and social living which, with abundant social sanction, they have sought to serve. The effort to remove impediments in contemporary culture to social and spiritual progress has had wide approval from many of those who are most vocal in their opposition to any religious elements in public education. The social justice crusades of the churches and synagogues arise out of the fact that their ethical message is stifled by organized forces in society that obstruct the growth of the human spirit. These are the historical fruits of secularism, which denies

the relevance of religion to life. Precisely the same concern motivates religious leaders who, with a firm fidelity to the public schools, nevertheless find in the secularization of education a force that steadily drives religion into the background of human concern. Those who object to other-worldliness in religion should recognize that this dualism is enshrined in a secularist culture.

The idea that the churches are asking the schools to do their work is due to a misreading of the facts. Many churchmen joined ranks with the secularists long ago in supporting the exclusion of religion from the schools. This report is addressed as much to church people as to any other group. If the churches and synagogues of America were fully convinced of the implications of the secularization of education, the popular mood would reflect that conviction in a stronger demand for its correction. We see our task in preparing this document as one of making articulate a concern which is growing in America, but which the churches are far from grasping in its full significance. When they do become aware of it, they sometimes seek ill-devised remedies. It would be difficult to find more vigorous denunciation of all efforts to introduce the study of religion into the schools than has come from some liberal churchmen. This fact, we think, with all respect, only illustrates the way in which the secularist outlook has invaded the church itself, with resulting confusion. These liberal churchmen are among the foremost champions of social justice and of the social expression of the religious impulse. They are characterized by a fine and generous insight into the spiritual worth of men and women who stand quite outside the religious community—and who sometimes put to shame those who are in the church but not of it! This very urbanity and breadth of outlook tend to minimize in their thinking the importance of institutional religion. We believe the religious structures of society, that is, the institutions of religion, are at least as essential to the permanent maintenance of religious faith and mood of mankind as other institutions are to the perpetuation of the interests

they serve.

This conviction, of course, is not shared by those to whom secularism is not only a policy but also a way of life. To them the school itself may seem to be in some sense the temple of the community's highest aspirations. If they are right, religious institutions, as such, will probably tend to atrophy and disappear. We contend that such an assumption is foreign to the mind and mood of the American people as a whole and that educational policy cannot be built upon it.

In any case it should be clear that in contemporary society the church and synagogue perform functions in the conduct of corporate worship, the nurture of growing persons in a particular spiritual fellowship, and the maintenance of a discipline of life in accord with a particular set of convictions, which can in no way be confused with the function of the school and could not be taken over by it. The schools aid the church today by giving to youth an appreciation of fundamental spiritual values to which we have referred. They might aid it much more by giving to youth an orientation toward the specifically religious phases of human culture. And they might remove a definite disservice to the church which results from the devaluation of religion that is implicit in ignoring it.

The primacy of the home as ideally the most effective of all educational agencies is no more impaired by what we propose than is the status of the church. It is true that part of what we are asking the schools to do—to lay a foundation for intelligent religious interest—can be accomplished in the home, and often is. But just as the school in a hundred other ways is daily called on to compensate for the deficiencies of home life, so in respect to religion it may be a responsibility of the schools to compensate a cultural defect in many American homes. In the weekday religious education program this principle is already recognized, since the initiative comes from the parents. Unless we misconceive the whole problem, the function of the home in religious education will on the whole be amplified, not reduced, by the

performance of what we believe to be the function of the school.

It should go without saying that if and when anything suggested in this report is construed by parents as violating liberty of conscience their wishes should be deferred to. We realize that this is not so simple a matter as in the case of particular classes which one may attend or not. The incorporation of religious subject matter in the regular study program affects the whole body of students. Hence the proposal must stand or fall in accord with the reaction of the general public. It would seem, therefore, that any contemplated plan should be thoroughly discussed and evaluated by citizens, boards of education, representative community groups, and perhaps by special advisory commissions. If the community as a whole is not persuaded of its essential validity, it cannot be done.

XVI. THE SPIRITUAL REPLENISHMENT OF MODERN CULTURE

WE BEGAN this report with a characterization of modern culture as secular in the sense that it segregates religion from the common life. We now return to this theme in order to appraise our cultural deficit. The argument thus far has been based on the logic of the total educational situation rather than on definite claims concerning what changes the study of religion might be expected to make in the national character. Critics of all such proposals are fond of pointing to the fact that nations which have turned out to be notorious mischief-makers have been at great pains to instruct their children in religion. We hold that no *a priori* judgment of the result of such a program of religious education as we are advocating is possible. The integration of religion with the total process of general education has not been accomplished in modern times. The schools might conceivably succeed in their part of the task and the churches and synagogues fail in theirs, precisely as a superb piece of political education in the schools might be frustrated by the activities of political parties. We who write this report are members of religious

bodies to which we owe allegiance by conviction. For us, the democratic faith means that the worth of persons and the increasing perfectibility of human institutions rests on a religious conception of human destiny. We believe that the Judaeo-Christian affirmation that man is a child of God expresses an authentic insight which underlies all particular theological formulas. We further believe that many of those who are fighting valiantly for the democratic cause under wholly non-religious slogans are unconsciously trading on "borrowed capital" that has been furnished by the religious tradition of the culture. We think the effort to sustain a social ethic that has been severed from its cultural roots will not succeed generation after generation. That rootage is not merely in concepts and articles of faith but in the ongoing corporate religious life of our people. Yet believing all this, we repudiate all intolerance of persons who support democracy on wholly secular grounds.

What we do contend insistently is that in the effort to build a democratic society a failure to capitalize the ideals of ethical monotheism, the teachings of Judaism and of Christianity, the tough fibre of that integrity which made the church resist, more effectively than any other institution, the Nazi tyranny in Europe—a failure to preserve such great assets is sheer cultural madness. It is, to be sure, largely the fault of the churches that religion in the Western world appears not as a unifying, but as a divisive, force. But underneath the cleavage between Catholic and Protestant, between Christian and Jew, is the stream of the Judaeo-Christian tradition with its conception of the common source and spiritual equality of all men as the children of God; the obligation to respect the supreme worth of persons and the wickedness of exploiting them; the golden quality of mercy; the meaning of redemptive love; the inexorableness of the law that he that soweth the wind shall reap the whirlwind. These are great cohesive spiritual forces to which the secular order of society probably owes more than it suspects. The practical question that confronts statesmen and educators in a time of great cultural up-

heaval is what steps shall be taken to use the obvious resources of our religious tradition and the institutions that foster it. This is no time for an irrational alliance between complacent churchmen, actuated by fear that the state will impair their ecclesiastical independence through the instrumentality of the common schools, and extreme secularists, who see in institutional religion only the preservation of superstition. We face a condition, not a theory.

On all sides we see the disintegration of loyalties, the accentuation of partisan strife, the revival of ancient prejudices, the increase of frustrations, the eclipse of hope. It is not our purpose to assign any single cause for these cultural and personal ills, or to propose any single solution. The issue is not whether any of us know the right answers; on that we shall never agree. The issue is whether we shall take stock of our cultural possessions, find the springs from which our people draw their spiritual sustenance, and, from them, irrigate the waste places in our common life.

Educators are increasingly stressing the need for guidance and counseling directed toward the integration of personality on higher levels of responsible living. Discerning treatises are written about the causes of frustration and the disintegration of personality. Religion at its best has always been an integrating force, a spiritual tonic for a soul wracked by fear and cringing in weakness. It is one of the marks of a secular age that scholarly and earnest persons who seek to fortify the human spirit are unmindful of the greatest resource that mankind has known. To those who are convinced that religion has little to offer and that true progress can come only by secular means, we say only that every man must find the altar of his own soul and that the people have erected their altars throughout the land. Religion in America is an empirical fact. As such, it is marked by many imperfections, but it embodies the faith of the majority of the people. Its imperfections will not be lessened by an attitude of splendid isolation on the part of intellectuals, or of indifference on the part of those responsible

for the education of youth.

It is worth noting that all reforms that come to fruition in history are motivated out of the past. There is always a harking-back to the ideals of a former age, to the tradition of the fathers, or to a lost sense of destiny. The imperative toward moral betterment comes out of a common heritage. Even if in the iconoclastic zeal of the moment everything belonging to the historic past is derided, there comes a time when ancient tradition is appealed to for guidance in the new day. True, time makes ancient good uncouth, but without the ancient good we should be chartless on a stormy sea.

XVII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

WE HAVE endeavored to state the problem arising out of the secularization of American life and education. Before it can be solved, careful studies will need to be made of local community situations, of various types of experimentation now going on, of professional and lay opinion, of the legal questions involved, and of the experience of other countries. It is our intention to initiate studies of this sort to the fullest extent possible. In this report we have attempted the preliminary task of stating the problem in a context of educational principles.

In brief, the problem is how to find a way to give due recognition in public education to the place of religion in the culture and in the convictions of our people while at the same time safeguarding the separation of church and state. A solution, as we see it, requires the charting of a middle course between the existing situation and the adoption of expedients which are unwarranted. The exclusion of religion from the public schools which so largely prevails today results in its relegation in the minds of youth to a position of relative unimportance. This runs counter, we believe, to the intention of the American school system from the beginning. On the other hand, any educational innovation which would tend to identify public education with a particular body of sectarian beliefs and practices we hold to be not only impracticable but improper.

We have drawn a distinction between secularism as a philosophy of life, which owes nothing to historical religion in any form, and the divorce of religion from everyday human affairs. We do not believe that the American people or American educators are committed to an irreligious, secular philosophy. Rather, what has come about in the modern world and in the educational system is the isolation of religion from the daily concerns of business, industry, and politics and from the educational disciplines designed for our youth. Holding to the principle of the separation of church and state in America, we nevertheless deplore what we consider a strained application of that principle in our school system. We are unable to believe that a school which accepts responsibility for bringing its students into full possession of their cultural heritage can be considered to have performed its task if it leaves them without a knowledge of the role of religion in our history, its relation to other phases of the culture, and the ways in which the religious life of the American community is expressed. An educated person cannot be religiously illiterate.

It would be quite unjustified, of course, to contend that the secularization of modern life is wholly due to the prevailing educational pattern. Indeed, we have endeavored to show that for several centuries a process of cultural fragmentation has been going on with the result that modern society lacks a unifying spiritual principle. It is our belief, however, that this process was very greatly stimulated by the artificial limitation of the school curriculum to nonreligious subject matter. That this process was occasioned by sectarian controversy for which religious bodies must largely bear the blame, we freely recognize. But this fact serves only to emphasize the possibility of a solution of the sectarian problem which will not be nihilistic with reference to the study of religion as a basic human concern.

It is far from our purpose to suggest that remedying what is here characterized as a fault of our educational system would in itself restore spiritual unity and integrity to

the culture. There is no panacea for the spiritual ills of our age. We are convinced, however, that it is idle to attempt to recover for religion its essential role in social and personal living so long as it is denied recognition in the schools.

Growing dissatisfaction with the situation we have described has led naturally to a variety of proposals for its correction. To these we have given earnest thought, but while we have definite convictions about certain of them, we are convinced that the practical solution of the problem to which they are addressed awaits more extensive investigation and study. Concerning two proposals frequently advanced we have felt called upon to express a judgment.

Many persons believe it possible to distill from our major religious faiths certain common ideas and propositions to which the American people would overwhelmingly give assent, and make of these a common core of religious instruction. No doubt this could be done in many American communities. Indeed, it is being done in some school systems today. But we believe it objectionable from a religious point of view as well as on educational grounds. It seems to us that to pursue such a policy would be, at best, to assume that the support of an overwhelming majority of the people justified overriding the convictions of a minority. The rights of minorities must be protected if religious liberty as defined in American law and custom is to have any meaning. Not only so, but "religious instruction" of this sort runs counter to the trend of public educational practice in America which disapproves indoctrination with reference to matters of belief.

Concerning weekday religious education, we have noted that it is peripheral to the subject of this report. We have been content to state the pros and cons concerning its most controversial phase—the conducting of sectarian classes in school buildings by representatives of the several faiths. It appears that new legal precedents may be established with respect to this practice which has been adopted in some communities. Many people believe that on the principle

of local control of educational policy there is much to be said for such a program, as against a rigid secularization which excludes religion altogether. In this report, however, we have addressed ourselves primarily to possibilities which we think inherent in the present situation without statutory or constitutional changes, provided the statutes and constitutional provisions are subject to reasonable interpretation. We do not regard it as reasonable to construe a ban on sectarian instruction as prohibiting all study of religious subject matter.

Fundamental to the proposals we have set forth is an interpretation of "teaching" which distinguishes it from indoctrination in the ordinary sense of that word. We have recognized that religious indoctrination is widely practiced in our churches and synagogues. It is their right to practice it if they are so disposed. But in order to introduce the study of religion into the public schools, the teaching process must be understood in a different sense, the sense in which it is commonly used today in application to all study of controversial subjects about which reasonable people differ. We have frequently used the phrase "the study of religion" instead of "teaching religion" because the latter so commonly implies indoctrination.

In line with this understanding of what the teaching process involves in the religious field, we have suggested as one possibility including in the literature program, at the appropriate level, study of our basic religious classic, the Bible, in order that our youth may become familiar with the majority of the literary sources of their religious heritage. It is scarcely possible to understand the central values of Western culture without a knowledge of the Bible. Study of it in the school, with whatever adjustments in the matter of texts used may be thought desirable, should go far to overcome the religious illiteracy of our time. Experience indicates that where the aim is to educate, not to proselytize, inhibitions dwindle away. Here, too, however, conscientious objection should be respected. To those who contend that the study of the Bible as literature

is not religious study at all the obvious answer is that the Bible is *religious* literature and can be studied only as such. To use it as a basis for doctrinal instruction is the function of church, synagogue, or home, not of the public school.

We have suggested also that attention be given in the social studies program to the religious life of the community. It surely is as important that our children become thoroughly familiar with the activities and programs of the churches as that they learn the operation of banks, factories, and markets. Here again what we are suggesting is no substitute for religious education in the full sense of the term. Rather, it is aimed at a sympathetic acquaintanceship with religion as an aspect of contemporary life.

These are illustrations of an approach to a major educational problem. They are aimed at breaking down the barrier between the religious and the secular in the educational system. If such procedures are successfully undertaken they will naturally lead to the exploration of the religious phases of the various disciplines through which our children and youth pass at successive levels. We wish to see school boards, administrators, and teachers freed from fear of sectarian indoctrination in order that religion may be given attention wherever it comes naturally within the scope of the educative process.

One of our major concerns has been with the present status of religion at the college and university level. Here we find a paradoxical situation. On the campuses of some tax-supported institutions there is a great deal of religious activity and in many cases there are successful departments of religion. On the other hand, in the teaching of science and philosophy a mind-set often prevails against historical religion in all its forms. In many publicly controlled institutions of higher learning there prevails a superciliousness with respect to religion and an actual indoctrination against widely held religious convictions. This is an insidious intrusion of doctrine, a violation of the principle of

religious liberty, and an abuse of academic freedom.

But if the free and untrammelled study of religious subject matter in the ways here suggested is to be made possible in the schools, teachers must be prepared for the task. This does not, in general, mean special teachers, but men and women who have not neglected the religious phases of the culture or of their several disciplines. The teacher-education institutions and the liberal arts colleges, which now furnish the majority of teachers in elementary and secondary schools, should assume responsibility for leadership in bringing this about.

The religious community itself, which must bear a large part of the blame for the extremes to which secularization has gone, has an important part to play in their correction. Everything we have suggested can be blocked or nullified by sectarian bitterness, suspicion, and fear. If our religious leaders have a serious concern over religious illiteracy and the secularization of life, they must give the educators freedom to enrich the curriculum of the schools in ways that are sound and wholesome. The schools belong to the people and they are bound to reflect the people's fears and prejudices as well as their aspirations. Broadly speaking, there should be a meeting of minds among religious leaders in the community before a school administration can be expected to move in the direction we have indicated.

This report is addressed to people who believe in the American school system, in which the authors also profoundly believe. We have sought to make it clear that we are in full sympathy with those who stress the spiritual values which are inherent in public education. Indeed, we consider the democratic aims of education which stress the immeasurable worth of persons, the values of mutual understanding, and the possibility of human fellowship across all racial and creedal lines as the flowering of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. To this extent our schools are undoubtedly en-

gaged in a spiritual enterprise. It is our conviction, however, supported, we believe, by the vast majority of the American people, that in the long run the resources of religion are essential for the preservation of these spiritual values.

Religion is either central in human life or it is inconsequential. If it is not basic in experience and in the culture, then the secularists are right in their neglect of it, and the testimony of the ages is false. We believe otherwise; and we think the fruits of the secularization of life are becoming evident to the masses of our people whose changing mood is made articulate in the utterances of some of the profoundest thinkers of our time. The intensive cultivation of religion is, and always has been, the function of religious institutions. To create an awareness of its importance is a

responsibility of public education. In creating such an awareness the school is but rounding out its educational task, which culminates in the building of durable convictions about the meaning of life and personal commitments based upon them. The school cannot dictate these convictions and commitments, but it can, and should, foster a sense of the obligation to achieve them as a supreme moral imperative and to that end bring its students into contact with the spiritual resources of the community. Let us abate none of our enthusiasm for scientific knowledge and useful skills, but let us remember that only a strong faith that can resolve the perplexities of life and a lasting commitment to high purposes will make education complete.

II

EVALUATIONS OF

The Relation of Religion

to Public Education — The Basic Principles

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The report of the Committee on Religion and Education published under the title: "The Relation of Religion to Public Education," is both disarming and persuasive. It needs to be disarming because many Americans in the field of public education and many who are active in religious work, spring to arms at any suggestion to introduce the teaching of religion in the public schools. The author of these lines confesses to the same quick indignation at any such proposal.

It will be readily understood and as readily forgiven if a member of a minority religious group is particularly sensitive on this question. It might be well to bear in mind that those who are today a majority may some day become a minority. In fact almost all religious groups in America are in some localities already a minority. Since

our public schools are governed by local boards, every religious group in America will somewhere be in danger of having its religious convictions over-ridden to the extent that the teaching of religion (which will almost always tend to be in the mood of the religion of the majority) is introduced in the schools of the locality. But those of us who are a minority virtually everywhere are always sensitive on this question. Perhaps that is the way liberty is preserved, namely by sensitive minorities being "touchy" about their rights and their convictions.

But the report is disarming. It states that civilization has become, generally, secularist in most of the crucial fields of its activities, political, economic, etc.; that the schools have become secularist too. It had been the intention of the founders of our Republic that the schools be merely non-sectarian. It

was certainly not their intention that they become entirely secularist. In fact, the report makes the rather brilliant comment that the schools have become actually anti-religious both by their very pointed omission of religion when every other social force is discussed and described, and also by the frequent teaching of scientific secularism. The anti-religious mood of the schools certainly amounts to a type of sectarianism which was never originally intended and is surely not true education, descriptive of society as it actually is.

However, it may well be argued that secularist schools are precisely descriptive of society as it actually is. Society is secularist and the schools are secularist. Just let us try to establish prayer services in factories or in offices where religious forces have not the political influence which they have over government functions such as army and navy and we will discover very quickly how indifferent the masses of people are to religious devotions. No, society is deeply secular today and the modern public schools are a true reflection of it. We, therefore, cannot claim a widespread demand on the part of the *people* to overcome the non-religious nature of the public schools. We can only say that we church people are discontented with the secular nature of society, that we hope to change it and that we will try to persuade the government to let us change it by introducing the teaching of religion into the public schools. But this is not a *popular* demand.

Of course any group in America has the right to make its own demands of the government and of the public schools. The Chambers of Commerce have a right to ask that the schools teach the virtues of free enterprise on the ground that the whole world is in danger of being sovietized and the safety of our country demands that our school generation become thoroughly devoted to the cause of economic individualism. A good and a strong case can be made out for this demand. Labor will some day get around to making strong demands on our public schools. The struggle of the working classes for a better life is a noble

value which should be made clear to the children of our schools. And so on. But there is nothing wrong about such special demands in a democracy. A democracy works by adjustment of various pressures. Let us therefore be frank and say that religion as a personal devotion is *not* an overwhelming desire of the American people but *we* believe it should be and we want the schools to help us make it so.

The report, drawn up by a committee representative of many religious branches, is deeply aware of the danger of religious sectarianism developing in the public schools if religion is to be taught in them. It therefore proposes that the *general* values of all religions be taught, not as a separate subject but be included in various subjects already taught. Thus, in the history courses, the history of religion be included; in literature, the Bible be included; in social science, the description of religious institutions be included, and so forth. Thus there will be no indoctrination but, first of all, the "boycott" against religion will be overcome and the mood be instilled that religion permeates all of life (since it will permeate every subject).

It is to be seriously doubted whether this can be successfully achieved in the foreseeable future. For all practical purposes the concept "Religion" does not exist, not at least in the mind of the average teacher or the average writer of textbooks. Some philosophers have the concept of religion as such but the overwhelming majority of religious people have the concept: The Catholic Church, the Episcopal Church, Methodism, or Judaism. There is hardly anybody available to teach the equal value of all the various religious institutions, or to interpret the Bible as great literature without either affirming or denying that the Old Testament is prophetic of the events of the New. All religions are traditions which are cherished, and special convictions which are deemed universally true. They also have great common ground but their church occupies the entire lot. It is the conviction of the writer that no comments on the Protestant church by Catholic teachers or on the Catholic

church by Protestant teachers, or on Judaism by Christian teachers, or on Christianity by Jewish teachers, can fail to be inadequate and unintentionally deprecatory or unjust. We run great risks whenever we bring religion into the public schools, obvious risks incurred for dubious gains.

The public schools have a specific function which may well be endangered when religious teachings are introduced into them. It is the specific task of the public schools to teach the equal status and mutual comradeship of all Americans of whatever faith or race they may be. This is so vital a task, so indispensable to the functioning of our Republic, that we should hesitate greatly before taking the risk of hampering it by introducing religious instruction which almost inevitably (unless it were taught by philosopher-saints) would become sectarian and therefore divisive.

The school is not the only source of child instruction. The home is easily as important. Our homes too are secularized. This may be a more crucial fact than that our schools are secularized. Let us direct the full energy of the united religious forces of America towards making the homes religious, restoring daily prayer and regular Bible reading to them. Thus we may re-religionize America without endangering the specific democratic function of our state-supported schools.

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An unusually well-considered argument for religion in our schools. The authors understand what it is to learn, and to teach; they reject the idea of teaching a "common core" of competing beliefs; they realize that the week-day movement is sectarian; they are determined that church-state separation shall not be compromised, at least in the curriculum; they rely for the success of their project, not upon legal maneuvering, but upon convincing our people as a whole, so that the desired action may be truly national and truly democratic. The kind of curriculum, and the kind of teaching that are recommended lack only one thing (presently

to be described) to make them wholly desirable. Is the plan likely to be acceptable, however, even to the churches? It may prove to be less pleasing to the ecclesiastical mind than to the unchurched masses.

The practical advices are more nearly convincing than some of the grounds offered in support of them. The chief ground is alarm over the spread of practical secularism. Religion is called upon to save itself while yet there is time. The attitude is defensive; the argument is an upsprouting of fear and sense of weakness. At the base, it is true, lies contemplation of God, but American civilization is treated as if God had started off on a vacation. There is little indication of what he is accomplishing just now in the United States. With respect to his interest in the major ethical issues of our day there is a strange silence.

My sense of deficiency in the report begins with this defensive attitude and the ever-present over-generalization of the notion of religion and of God. If I could not discern something divinely creative in the events of today; if I did not see in our people's history as a whole an *unfolding* of the meaning of ultimate reality, I should have to disagree completely with the Committee's plan. In short, the basis of the plan is not sufficiently historical. Even the place of religion in our national culture does not receive historical analysis. The Judaeo-Christian tradition is a factor in it, to be sure, but a factor always in interaction with other factors also there, influencing them and being influenced. The national culture of today bears scars that are traceable to the very religion whose virtues I would join in extolling. One of these scars may be mentioned as an example: public schools in which simple knowledge of the origin of our race is withheld from pupils. The kind of religion that is responsible for this cultural robbery of the rising generation is in full fellowship with the religion that asks for a larger place in the curriculum! Would it be unkind to quote, as a partial guide out of our educational confusion, Mark Twain's epigram, "When in doubt, tell the truth"?

Religion is and has been a mixture, and the Judaeo-Christian variety is not an exception. This very religion is one of the sources of anti-semitism; of the treatment of labor in terms of 'master-and-servant'; of sex inequality; of nationalistic self-assertiveness; of a superiority complex that has handicapped this religion's own missions, and played into the hands of mammon. Not one of its three forms has attained clarity with respect to economic ethics, though much advice is offered. Pupils should have opportunity to get acquainted with this side of religion. Otherwise they will not know that one of the most shining virtues of religion is that it has struggled to cleanse *itself* from these very faults. There is, in fact, nothing more religious than repentance for defects in one's own religion, and pupils need to know that the Judaeo-Christian religion has at times reached even this height.

Our national culture includes, moreover, a profound religious dualism. Does being religious consist in following authoritative prescriptions, or rather in heeding the less intellectualistic impulses of ethical love? These two always have competed with each other, and they have competing relations to the public-school issue. Ethical love never founded a sect; never opposed the empirical methods of science; never committed itself to anything that now threatens to destroy the gains in culture that we call civilization. It has an inherent affinity for democracy. For our people it has the aroma of religion. When ethical love reaches a great height of self-giving, "He acts," say they, "like a Christian." This kind of religion could be made known in the schools without straining the separation principle. The present impasse is a creation of religious authoritarianism, which in its very nature is sectarian, bestows special privileges upon some class, and is unable to go the whole length with democracy in curriculum and methods of teaching.

Not only am I for much more religion in the curriculum than the report asks for; I believe that much more can be put there. It is practicable to increase pupils' acquaint-

ance with known acts of ethical love; also with known acts that contradict or defeat love. Advance on this line will soften, and ultimately melt, the barriers that are mistakenly erected in the name of law. I am inclined to challenge the American Council on Education with the question, Do you, or do you not believe that "Where love is, there is God"? If the schools will devote themselves to making love abound, they will have no occasion to steady the ark of any ecclesiastical body that accepts the old doctrine that "If we love one another, God abideth in us", and approves the welcoming of men into paradise for succoring the Christ though they discerned not his presence.

This is the only way now open or likely to open for increasing the appreciation of religion through the school curriculum. It will lead ultimately, as J. Paul Williams has seen, to recognition of really democratic relations of person to person as religious relations. That it will meet opposition from religious authoritarianism can be taken for granted. Men will say harsh things about schools that "follow not us". Do you ask, then, whether it is proper for public schools to take issue with religious authoritarianism? The answer is that they cannot teach religion democratically without doing it.

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One of the principal factors which made possible the founding of the modern American system of public schools about a hundred years ago was the decision to exclude sectarian religious instruction from the curriculum of those schools. Assented to reluctantly at the time, this decision increased in scope and strictness by the end of the nineteenth century. In fact its popularity was never greater than at the end of that century and at the beginning of the current one. Since the first World War, however, there has been a steadily increasing tendency to criticize this early precedent and to seek its relaxation or modification. The present brochure on *The Relation of Religion to Public Education — the Basic Principles* is

only the most recent and boldest instance of this tendency.

If we are to modify our traditional precedent of excluding religion from the public school curriculum and include it, as this report proposes, the following questions must be raised. (1) Has our traditional precedent worked badly during the past hundred years? (2) Have the basic conditions which gave its rise changed fundamentally? (3) Do the proposed changes improve on our traditional precedent in the way in which they combine the desirable interests of unity and diversity in our religious culture? It seems to me that the report fails to make a case on the first two points but makes a very strong one on the third.

(1) The report argues that the spirit which animated the founders of our American precedent has miscarried. For one thing, it has overshot its mark. Aimed at the elimination of sectarian instruction, it has resulted in an attempt to eliminate all religious instruction. Designed to prevent any sect from obtaining a preferred position in the public schools it has resulted in giving the naturalistic philosophy of secularism the predominant position there. What's more, secularism is getting credit for moral ideals originally the property of religion.

These arguments in a measure are true. But there is a measure in which they are subject to a different interpretation. True, the tendency has been to enlarge the concept of sectarianism to include all religious instruction but perhaps this was necessary to maintain unity in the public support of schools. Conditions, however, may change. We do not have to be guided at present by the intent of the framers of policy a hundred years ago; nor do we have to be guided now by the intent of the modifiers of policy fifty years later. In either case, the enduring lesson we should probably learn from this extension of the term sectarianism is that the average American, while he may keep up sectarian differences, does not take great stock in them and certainly is not going to wreck the unity of the public system to preserve them.

Again it is true that the naturalistic philosophy of secularism tends to prevail in the public schools but this may not be quite so unfair as the report represents. Instead of being a discrimination in favor of one philosophy, this policy may be a recognition that naturalism is that aspect of philosophy on which most common agreement can be reached to run so huge a cooperative enterprise as the public schools. While only a few philosophies are exclusively naturalistic, all or practically all of them, have at least a subordinate place for some naturalism. At any rate, that the secular and religious philosophies are not far apart is born out by the committee's charge that secularism is operating on a "borrowed capital" of moral ideas fostered by religion.

The report does not argue historically that the moral fibre of the nation has suffered for want of religious instruction. Dealing with principles rather than facts, perhaps it did not intend to. Yet, drawing its principles in part from the facts of history, the committee made a notable omission here. Perhaps the framers of this report thought such a case too difficult to prove. They had, for instance, no altogether satisfactory answer for the critics who point out that notoriously trouble-making nations like the Germans have been at great pains to instruct their children in religion.

(2) The basic reason for our hundred-year-old tradition of keeping religion out of the public schools was the fear that the irreconcilable differences between the sects would so divide the body politic as to make the support of a common system of schools impossible. Has this divisiveness so diminished today that it is no longer a danger to the unity of the public in its support of its schools? Is the public school so strong, indeed, that it can take this divisive issue into the bosom of its own curriculum without danger to its very heart? The report acknowledges at a number of points that the case for religion in the public schools remains weak because the friends of religion have been and continue to be divided among themselves. At no point do they give as-

surance that religion has been able to close its ranks. In fact they subscribe to a theory of two kinds of knowing which are qualitatively different, one scientific and the other religious. They see no hope whatever of validating religious truth and thereby enlarging the community of agreement as is possible in scientific truth. On this account the present is still too soon for the friends of public schools to relax their historic anxieties.

(3) But though religious differences are as irreducible as ever the exclusion of them from the public school curriculum for a hundred years does seem to have somewhat chastened the friends of religion. At first they preferred to have no religion in the public schools rather than to have their children contaminated in any way with doctrines of sects other than their own. At last here is a committee which would rather have conflicting doctrines taught in the public school rather than no religion at all. This is certainly a notable advance!

The proposal to teach religion in the public school like any other controversial issue there; to define the phrase "to teach religion" more as "to study" it, that is, to inquire into it, rather than to indoctrinate a particular sectarian position; and to have regular rather than special teachers do the teaching of religion, seems the most promising solution of the relation of religion and the public school since it became a problem a century ago. Certainly it is thoroughly democratic, especially if democracy be taken to mean, as Dewey defines it, an increase in shared purposes and meanings. The great objection to the "released time" program is that there is no mutual sharing or interpenetration of conflicting viewpoints. The procedure outlined in this report bids fair to pay more attention without favoritism to the diversities of religious culture and at the same time to promote more common understanding of them than has ever been done before.

It is an excellent omen for the success of this report that even orthodox groups were able to subscribe to it. It is much to be hoped that there will be a number of com-

munities which are courageous enough to give this proposal an earnest try.

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The report "The Relation of Religion to Public Education" will certainly arouse much controversy. It is the writer's prediction that it will be sharply criticized by the supporters of a non-sectarian public school system and also attacked by the defenders of conservative viewpoints in religion. In all probability, both groups will agree with the arguments advanced for more attention to the study of religion as an essential element in our American culture, and will approve the Committee's declaration that every individual should have a sufficient understanding of religion to provide a basis for well founded convictions. Disagreements will arise over the recommendations of the Committee relating to the public school's responsibility for "the study of religion."

In reviewing the report, public school officials will keep in mind that the United States has about 300 church bodies, some liberal and others conservative in their theological beliefs. They will therefore take exception to the implications of such proposals in the report as the following:

"The first obligation of the school with reference to religion is, we believe, to facilitate intelligent contact with it as it has developed in our culture and among our institutions."

"But we believe it is the business of public education to impel the young toward a vigorous, decisive personal reaction to the challenge of religion." If the public school were to accept the obligations implied in the foregoing proposals it would encounter vigorous opposition from influential church groups, especially the extreme liberals in religion as well as the conservative sectarian bodies. Public school officials will, of course, view with favor the conclusion of the Committee relating to separation of church and state as expressed in the following statement:

"The fact that our population is religiously heterogeneous puts the separation of church and state, as a broad political principle, beyond debate, regardless of what theories may be held concerning what would be appropriate in a different kind of society."

This statement is encouraging in view of the present efforts of some religious groups to secure some state financial support for educational programs designed to promote their own sectarian objectives. There are, however, other pronouncements in the report that will be welcomed by critics of our non-sectarian school system, especially the statements that imply that the school is in large part responsible for the growing secularization of modern life.

While the report contains some useful suggestions that might be followed by the public schools in selected communities, there is not much in the report that will be helpful to the majority of public schools that are faced with proposals involving the use of the schools for religious instruction. The report is to be commended for its favorable comments on the instruction in ethics that is now provided in our public schools, as well as for its commendation of the emphasis placed on the ideals of democracy, the common purposes of our American life, and the spiritual values inherent in our way of living and working together. Such instruction is, however, not considered by the typical citizens as religious in character, and hence has support from conflicting sectarian groups in all communities. The writer does not believe that the typical citizen desires that the public schools sponsor "the study of religion", because of the conviction that such study could not go forward without being tinged with sectarianism. In the report the Committee declares:

"Some religious groups do not welcome exposure of their children to the ideas, beliefs, and practices of other faiths."

Public school officials in many com-

munities will recognize that some of the proposals in the report will incur the opposition of the defenders of conservative viewpoints in religion. The proposal that the Bible be studied in the public schools is likely to arouse such opposition from those conservative groups that believe that the Bible should be studied as "the word of God" and not studied as one of the great literary classics. These conservative groups are not likely to approve the study of Bible in a public school except in terms of their own theological viewpoints. An effort to provide for such study would create friction and promote disunity, thus retarding rather than promoting certain of the objectives defined in the report.

The writer regrets that the Committee did not emphasize the responsibility resting on religious groups for framing their programs so as to supplement the instruction in ethics and character now provided in all public schools. Such an emphasis would have placed the responsibility for "the study of religion" where it belongs, namely with the approximately 300 religious bodies of the United States. Such an emphasis might also have encouraged churches in many communities to cooperate in an all-out effort to meet the religious needs of children and youth. The writer fears that this report will tend to justify continued neglect of religious education by many local churches, since it attempts to place on the public schools certain responsibilities that should be assumed by these churches. While the Committee declares that it does not seek to "provide an alibi" for churches, many readers will consider that the report has supplied a partial alibi.

It must be conceded that the Committee had an exceedingly difficult assignment, but in the writer's opinion the Committee has not solved the problem which it defined for itself. It is hoped, however, that the report will arouse such sharp disagreement that many constructive proposals will be forthcoming.

THOMAS J. QUIGLEY

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So many books, treatises, and studies come from the educational presses in these unsettled times that one is easily surfeited and persuaded to give scant attention to any of them. So many and such rapid changes occur on the social and political scene that one is tempted to believe all of them lack purpose and direction. Ours seems like an age of aimless maneuvering, of running in circles, one whose total expression is but "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals." When something is spoken or written that has a flavor of importance, experience advises a cautious evaluation for the next roll of the presses may produce an equally impressive and contradictory theory. A reviewer of educational literature is inclined to approach his task today with conservatism, if not actual skepticism.

With publication of the Report of the Committee on Religion and Education one is tempted to say a new day has dawned in educational thinking and writing. Here at last is a treatise constructive, purposeful, and direct. Only the richest superlatives of the language are fit to describe the forthright thinking and clear expression of this Report. It is a significant document, perhaps the most important yet published by the American Council on Education. Certainly nothing written in this generation by diplomats, sociologists, or scientists is more important for the cure of the ills that beset our times. It cuts sharply and straight to the roots of the weakness in modern culture, a weakness that has in this century all but destroyed family life, set the stage for abnormal waves of juvenile delinquency and crime, led us through two devastating wars, an unprecedented depression, and left us confused and bewildered at the threshold of the atomic age. United Nations Organizations, World Courts, national and international planning, economic schemes and counter-schemes, scientific discoveries, none of these alone have healed, or ever will heal, the wounds in

our culture. For our wounds are spiritual and moral. We have decorated the superstructure of our civilization with multiple creature comforts and mechanical devices. We have made it something beautiful to behold, but the signs of impending collapse are evident, because we have neglected to keep strong the foundations upon which it was first built. Never has this fact been more clearly stated than in this report.

The intelligent discussion of secularism in modern life is noteworthy. Happily no attempt is made to place the entire blame for secularism upon the public schools. Education has been forced to reflect a drift towards secularism in our economic, social, and political life. The Committee clearly distinguishes between the formal philosophy of Secularism which is supported by a small minority, and the historical trend towards a secularish attitude in our daily lives. Americans in general are religious rather than secularist, but because of carelessness in protecting the founts of their culture, they have allowed secularism to insinuate itself into their lives. The report points out that the American people never intended to ignore in their educational system that important part of the cultural inheritance which is represented by religious values and institutions. The unreasonableness of applying the principle of the separation of Church and State to the problem of religion and education is made crystal clear. The separation of Church and State is an American policy designed to guarantee religious liberty. Contrary to the intent of the American mind it has been used as a red herring dragged across the path of every suggestion made to teach religion to American youth.

American parents desire their sons and daughters to possess the entire social inheritance of western culture, and a large and fundamental part of this is spiritual, moral, and religious. The historical situation which makes it a practical impossibility to teach denominational religion in the public schools does not imply that religion

cannot be taught, any more than the separation of Church and State implies the separation of religion from the lives of the people.

The reference in the report to the fact that Catholic Schools have also been tainted by secularism to the extent that they have sometimes taught religion as a special course separated from the so-called secular branches, is a well founded criticism. Religion is a life to be lived rather than a book to be learned. It is more effectively taught as an integrated part of history, geography, sociology, and the other subjects in the program. This is the ideal of Catholic curriculum planners. There is no reason why a similar integration cannot be included in the program of the public schools. Such an integration as the report suggests will necessitate serious study. If there ever was any reason for excluding religion from the public school program, it should not be re-introduced without careful research. But the first step toward that research has now been made.

A Catholic educator is also an American citizen and considers himself a part of American education. Because he loves his country as a citizen should, he is deeply concerned that all American youth possess a knowledge and understanding of the rich religious sources from which the American way of life has developed. He can only rejoice if a way is found to include the study of religion and religious institutions in public educations.

The Relation of Religion to Public Education should be widely read and seriously studied by all Americans, particularly by teachers who are intimately concerned with the development of future Americans. The Committee on Religion and Education deserves sincere thanks and congratulations for this scholarly, literary, and important contribution to the thinking of our age.

STEWART G. COLE

Secretary of the Pacific Coast Division of the Bureau for Intercultural Education

In the Report of the Committee on Religion and Education dealing with the basic principles in the relation of religion and public education, the following affirmations are made:

1. It is the job of public education to introduce youth critically and appreciatively to the inclusive range of values of democratic culture, which is America at its best.

2. The forces of religion are an integral part of this culture and should be included therefore in the curriculum of public education.

3. The public school, in colonial times the interpreter to youth of a religion (church)-centered American society, has bit by bit yielded to the acidity of secularism until it is now offering youth a kind of education that disregards the subject of religion and, in particular, the Judaeo-Christian heritage of western culture.

4. A result of this distorted introduction of youth to the American way of living is that: (a) youth are not receiving the understanding and sanctions of religion they need to help them stand firm in our times, and (b) youth are being taught, by indirection, that religion may be a negligible human interest in the maintenance of a sound American democracy.

5. The public school, if it is to continue to serve the interests of our democratic culture, must rethink its function and re-incorporate into its program a fit place for the subject of religion. The report gives suggestions as to how this task can be accomplished.

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Supporting the claims of this report are two suppositions:

1. By religion is meant: (a) personal allegiance to the values of ultimate reality (God), and (b) personal association with the specific religious institution in

society, the church or synagogue, for the purpose of duly recognizing these values in worship and in other appropriate social activities.

2. By secularism is meant certain de-personalizing conditions in modern American life, socio-economic, mechanistic, and materialistic, that rob individuals of a sense of their sacred value and of their obligation to honor the moral and spiritual imperatives of our historic culture.

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Granting the validity of these suppositions, the claims of the report are resolute and convincing. But what about the definitions of religion and secularism? Are they sound? There's the rub. The members of the Committee selected as a frame of reference for their thinking a viewpoint that is characteristically ecclesiastical; but it is one that is becoming increasingly foreign to the thinking of many men who represent public education and who invest themselves in highminded devotion to the cause of youth and to the field of education for American democracy.

When these educators refer to religion, they have in mind two different phenomena: (1) The religion of the churches with its stress upon certain articles of faith, ritual, and church-parish practice; and (2) those moral and spiritual qualities of experience that may be activated on any occasion under any auspices, solely depending for their emergence upon fit and happy interaction of person and person or person and nature in meeting the needs for creative human living.

These educators include under the term "secular" two different references: (1) negatively, the secular is any condition or influence in society that hurts the well-being of persons; and (2) positively, secularism refers to those functions and activities in society that are carried on free from the direction or control of any form of ecclesiasticism.

* * * * *

An individual, if he is serious minded,

will accept the definitions of religion and secularism as stated in the report *or* as stated above, depending upon his philosophy of the good and the beautiful.

If he follows the lead of the report, then it is clear that he chooses to think within the framework of historic religious ideology. The church or synagogue with its selective values, scriptures, and beliefs is divinely appointed to inspire religion in any man; and the only adequate language of the good and the beautiful is the theistic symbolism of the historic institutions of Judaism and Christianity.

If, on the other hand, he identifies himself with these particular educators, then he resorts to a functional and naturalistic orientation of the good and the beautiful. These values of man, essential to his well-being, are aspects of creativity, whether on the cosmic, human, or human-cosmic levels of behavior. So far as human behavior is concerned, these values are not to be identified as the special prerogative of any institution, church or non-church; they are not necessarily inherent in institutional practices. They become and reinforce the good life whenever and wherever persons treat each other with high respect, address themselves cooperatively to deserving causes, and thus permit the good and the beautiful to articulate themselves in persons and society. The conditions of democracy, when honored, afford a favorable human climate in which such moral and spiritual values may emerge and receive fitting confirmation. So far as the public school is concerned, there are many educators in it who are deeply conscious of the need for such values in public education, and are addressing themselves day and night to the task of making them potent forces in public school service.

There are innumerable ideologies and dialects within the English language that interpret and communicate the values of the good and the beautiful. The church has one general pattern of symbolism; the public school has another.

It is only fair to add that there are

many church leaders who would welcome a change in the church's pattern of thinking and ideology in terms of a functional view of the nature of religious reality.

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In so far as the above statement represents the viewpoint of key schoolmen in public education, it is not difficult to conclude what their reactions will be to the main body of the report. They will include:

1. The dichotomy of the religious and the secular is not only misleading language, but it is actually misrepresentative of the nature of the good and the beautiful and their antithesis as these appear in reality. To identify the positive values primarily with the testimony of the church and to impute to the public school a major denial of these values in its service to persons is dangerous social analysis.

2. The public school, like the church, the family, and all other institutions of society, includes in its operation both secular and religious elements. Secular factors are of two kinds: one, those influences and activities harmful to persons, growing out of the imperfection of the school's service to youth; and the other, a program of public education that is free from church control. The particular religious elements in the public school include those associations and activities that give rise to the sense of human worth, personal maturation, child-belonging in a democracy, growth of moral sensitivity, personal kinship with the good and the beautiful in the cosmos, and the manifold other spiritual values that are intrinsic in good education.

The criteria of the religious for public education are not necessarily involved in any particular institutional, literary, idealistic or activity event, but solely in the superbly meaningful and enriching qualities associated with any creative event of whatsoever source or sponsorship.

The criteria of the secular are of two types: Those activities carried on apart

from the established institution of religion, and easily documented; and those that deny a sense of worth, of belonging, of high resolve to youth, and are not always clearly indicated.

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Does the fact that members of the Committee agreed in the findings of the report mean that there was no member in it who represented the type of educational philosophy that has been set forth in this statement? If so, the writer would regard the Committee as unfortunately constituted. When the vigorous exponents of this report can meet with a similar number of educators representing the functional and naturalistic approach with a view to rethinking the place of religion in public education, a noteworthy step in the strategy of school and church planning may be hoped for.

RABBI LEON FRAM

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Seldom has a statement favoring the study of religion in the public schools been written with such complete freedom from the crusading attitude and with such full understanding of the considerations which impel men to oppose such a project. The Committee on Religion and Education of the American Council on Education presents a profound and effective argument in behalf of the proposition that religion, being an essential part of American culture, ought not be ignored in American public schools. Its report is unfavorable to such familiar devices for religious education in the public schools as the Release Time Plan or the giving of special "non-sectarian" courses in religion. It recommends instead that the place of religion in American culture become an integral part of the entire educational program so that a study of the Bible shall become part of the courses in literature and the study of church or synagogue as an institution shall be a part of the courses in history, sociology and community life. The Committee makes no pretense that this plan

could be easily carried out. It even states specifically that where all the elements of a community would fail to agree on such a plan, it should not be attempted.

It should be stated that it would be hard to imagine anyone objecting to that part of the Committee's report which deals with religious studies on the college level.

Even on the pre-college level, one hesitates to speak of opposition to the report. It is only a question of whether the Committee has taken seriously enough the meaning of one of its own concluding sentences. "Religion is either central in human life or it is inconsequential."

Is it not precisely because religionists have always regarded their religion as the central fact in life that the historic battles for the separation of Church and State had to be fought? Once any church or any religion had control of a public institution, whether the school or any other institution, it was compelled by its very conviction of the centrality of religion to mold that institution in accordance with its beliefs. Once religion got a foothold in the field of public education, it would be compelled by its very conviction of the centrality of religion to seek complete control of the schools. It is in the very nature of religion that it cannot be satisfied with being merely a functioning part of an institution. Because religion deals with ultimate purposes, therefore, it is driven to control any institution with which it becomes associated.

A society may have respect for religion and yet not wish to be under control of religion. So the pilgrims fled the Church of England to found a church of their own in America. So, many Mexicans revolted against church power in Mexico, yet had their infants baptized.

Let us consider, for instance, the fact that in 1939, great denominational bodies of the Protestant Church were committed to pacifism. So were a number of Rabbis. If in 1939 a corp of teachers trained in

Normal School to teach religious values manned the public schools of America, would not the public schools have become centers of resistance to national defense? Since the resolutions committing the church bodies to pacifism were passed soon after World War 1, would not teachers teaching religion in the public schools have raised as conscientious objectors the very generation of American youth which was needed to defend the country in World War 11? The fact that religion is central in human life could in this situation have spelled disaster for mankind. Hitler could have conquered "over the telephone" a country in whose schools children were educated by men who believed that religion was pacifism and religion was the central controlling factor in life.

It is undoubtedly good for religion to be central in the life of the individual; it may not be good for religionists to be in a position to mold public institutions to the shape of their dogmas, whether ancient or recent.

Now for the other side of the alternative. Is it true that if religion cannot be represented in the public schools, it becomes inconsequential? There are other essential fields of human life which have been kept out of public schools. There is the instance of military education. Our country came into being as a result of a seven year war. Not long after its founding, it had to fight another war against the old mother country. It had to fight again to bring about the abolition of slavery. Twice within our generation it was necessary for our youth to take up arms to fight in defense of our democracy, our civilization, our very existence. In view of this record, the art of war might well be regarded as one of the essential features of our culture. It is by virtue of the military skill and zeal of our youth in the Army, Navy and the Air Force that we have survived. It would seem logical, then, that military training, so indispensable to our survival, should be given in

the public schools. Yet our educators have successfully resisted every effort to make military training an integral part of the public school system. The reason for this separation of the Army from the school is well known. It is important for our youth to defend our country; yet such is the nature of military training that once it entered our school system it could control and distort it. The parallel is, of course, not exact. Nevertheless, it ought to be conceivable that religion may be a source of good as long as it is "on its own." It can become a source of evil when it enters a public institution and and is tempted to assume state power, or the state is tempted to assume power over it.

To sum up, the alternative offered by the Committee is unreal. It need not be true that religion is either "central in human life, or it is inconsequential." Religion may remain out of the public school system, and yet may by its own effort as an organization based upon voluntary adherence play a beneficially influential role in our lives.

HUGH HARTSHORNE

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Presumably each one of us would like to see his personal religious views prevail. Such views, however, are so numerous and so varied that the intensification of individual commitment proposed by the report might lead to still further cultural disunity than we already have. The report claims, probably with justice, a rather general agreement on "spiritual values," but proposes that these must be supported by religious sanctions which are acknowledged to be quite divergent. Nevertheless, greater stress is laid on these alleged religious foundations than on the ethical values they are supposed to undergird.

In this respect, the report may be correct. But if it is, then the consequences should be faced with greater realism. For example, the proposed democratic study of religious beliefs and institutions is itself a manifestation of a particular

philosophical outlook. Just as democracy is presupposed in and produced by openminded discussion and experiment, so a particular religious view is presupposed in and produced by the methods outlined in the report. If authoritarian religions are willing for public schools to approach the study of religion with these presuppositions, well and good. If I were a convinced member of such a group, I could only oppose the proposal. I hope, however, that I may be mistaken, but this is only because, like everyone else, I would like to see my own views prevail. If I am not mistaken, it seems to me probable that the general adoption of the committee's plan could result only in the withdrawal of large numbers of children from public schools and the substitution of private religious schools.

Unfortunately, the problem of the parochial school as a factor in the sustenance or destruction of a democratic social order was not discussed. This seems to me to be the central issue. There are values at stake besides that of individual freedom of choice. A permanent dichotomizing of the cultural pattern is the inevitable consequence of two systems of schools established on radically opposed basic philosophies. Rather than promote this dual system, it would seem the better part of statesmanship to do everything possible to reestablish a unified system of education, even if only on the basis of commonly accepted "spiritual values."

There are details of the report that seem to me to warrant further thought. One is the conception of "secularization," which is regarded as catastrophic. There seems to me to be some confusion here. The whole approach to the problem of the report is itself of a product of the secularization movement and would have been inconceivable without the contemporary separation of thought from religious controls and limitations. Perhaps the particular interpretation of secularization presented grows out of the conception of religion that lies back of the report. It

does not seem to free itself completely from the conception of the church, and is perhaps too exclusively theological and institutional, and too little ethical and psychological.

This is borne out by the paragraphs which state the committee's definition of religion, as well as by references to religious "sanctions," which as they stand remain unexplained.

Nor does "secularization" as defined explain the widespread acceptance of "spiritual values." It would seem that secularization had succeeded where religion had failed. Perhaps secularization is in part at least the ethicizing of culture, the universalizing of the ethical values of religion divorced from divisive sectarian theologies, and therefore, in a psychological sense, a truly religious process.

The committee holds to the right of parents to have their children excused from discussions obnoxious to them, but at the same time the proposal is for the rather complete assimilation of religious material into the curriculum, which would make any such withdrawal impracticable and would necessarily lead to removal of pupils from the school altogether if insisted upon. This means, as noted, further pressure towards parochial schools. The issue is hardly met by having the religiously minded members of a community reach some agreement in advance of adopting the proposals. This would not satisfy the non-religious.

If there is any point in the educational system at which democracy, in the interest of its own survival, may properly exercise authoritarian control, it is in the selection and training of its teachers and its teachers of teachers. It is here the first steps must be taken. But the report is eminently wise in suggesting also the challenging effect on higher education of significant experiments in the schools. But not much can be hoped for at either level without the formulation of some basis of cooperation between members of groups whose philosophical presuppositions are

at odds. The report is a courageous attack on the problem. Its fine spirit is itself an expression of such a basis, for when men of divergent views are willing to discuss their differences, they have already yielded allegiance to a community which includes them all. This is the hope of mankind. Let us not destroy it by calling it Catholic, or Protestant, or Jewish, or pagan, or religious, or secular, or by any name which divides us. The report asks us to turn for inspiration to the past. I say, no. Let us turn to the future.

EMANUEL GAMORAN

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The report on the "Relation of Religion to Public Education" issued by the Committee on Religion and Education of the American Council on Education, is most stimulating and thought-provoking. Anyone who reads it without prejudice will be grateful to the American Council on Education and to this committee for its analyses and for many of the insights which the report contains on one of the most vexing and complex problems of our day.

Having said the above, however, and turning to an examination of the report from the point of view of the practical recommendations which it makes, it is disappointing to find that in so many respects the concrete suggestion seems impossible of application and even if executed, to be fraught with danger, as at least one writer sees it, to the American way of life and the democratic tradition which America stands for.

The essay starts with what the writers consider the central problem, namely, the secularization of modern life. This is defined essentially as a denial of the relevance of religion to the major activities of life, so that politics, economics, and other areas of life are treated as a part of life and therefore as a part of education in the public school, while religion is not. The conclusion to which the framers of the

report come is that religion is thus made to appear either insignificant or so completely divorced from life as not to be possible of integration into the educational system. From the very beginning the question arises, is it correct to say that the difficulty with secularism is not the denial of religion but the denial of its relevance? Is it not true that even though the number of people who accept secularism as a complete way of life and who would be ready to say that it is "an ethical philosophy by which one may live" is limited, a very large number of people in our day pay lip service to the historical religions but regulate their daily life by a secularist philosophy? For example, the statement in the report that the tendency to think of the economic order as outside the sphere of moral criticism in school or in church, is a secularist phenomenon, can hardly be reconciled with the fact that so many of the people who object to such criticism of the economic order are pillars of the church. If their religious affiliations were not a mere external form, would they not feel that one most important functions of the church is to criticize the economic order? For the true function of religion is to improve and enhance life.

Putting it a little differently, may it not be that the central analysis of the report, which bases itself on the idea of the secularization of modern life and on the secularization of education, is wrong, and that the difficulty is rather to be sought in our failure to make religion function in those spheres in which it should primarily function, namely, the actual life of human beings? Would not our own divorce of the church and synagogue from politics and economics account better for the lack of prestige on the part of religion than its exclusion from public education? If we are right in this respect it would appear much more serious than the fact that the public school gives the pupils an opportunity to learn of all the aspects of culture but religion, is the fact that the

religions, and especially the *functioning religious institutions* — the churches and the synagogues — have allowed other agencies to perform the functions which they should have assumed. For example, if the changes in favor of the masses of the people which have been brought about primarily by the New Deal had been the result of the religious activities of our churches and synagogues, would not the laboring masses have responded favorably to these institutions and regarded them to a large extent as their saviors? The effect of such action on the part of the religious groups would, it seems to me, be far more significant for the correction of the secularization of the age than visits paid by children in our schools to various religious institutions in their community or the study of the great literary portions of the Bible in the school.

Another fundamental difficulty with the general analysis, it seems to me, is the fact that throughout the report there is apparent a confusion between two concepts of reality, reality as concerning itself with what is what *in* the world and with what ought to be. The discovery of what is, including the laws which operate in the world, is a legitimate function of science. Reality in the sense of what ought to be is the function of religion. Yet the report in a number of places implies that religion concerns itself with reality in the former sense, provided that phase of reality has as yet not been explored by science. To make the province of religion that which science has not yet explored but which it may discover the day after tomorrow, seems to this writer unwise. If, therefore, religion is to be in the area of values and aspirations rather than in the area of a description of the world as it is, it does not appear logical to attack the naturalistic approach of many of the teachers in our schools. From the point of view here presented, naturalism is not necessarily in conflict with religion. If one were to take this part of the report seriously, one would

have to come to the conclusion that a supernatural conception of religion is necessarily assumed. Yet in other parts of the report the writers, in defining religion, indicate that the concepts of it radically differ all the way from supernaturalism on the extreme right to endowing "the cosmos itself with spiritual purpose and power."

After pointing out that the American tradition is to give local communities control, the report makes an appeal for greater trust in the people to manage their schools. It seems to me there is no reason for assuming that the states and the local communities will show greater wisdom in handling their educational problems than the leading religious educators of the country. Our experience with various communities in which the release time plan has been operating does not reflect the exercise of such wisdom, why should we assume that in the future it will? The contention of those who oppose any possible infringement by the state on the church, is not that the separation of church and state in our educational system has been absolute. On the contrary, objections are raised to the extension of anything that might result in control by the state of the church or in the control of a minority by a majority group. Minorities in our country have good reason to be suspicious of such control. Witness, for example, the attitude of the Columbians in Georgia, or the attitude of the South in general to the Negro.

The report further assumes that recent attempts in various states to introduce release time represents popular demand to overcome the effects of secularization. We doubt that this is due to demand, to say nothing of "popular demand." May it not be due to the fact that our churches are weak and are seeking to prop themselves up by the support of the state and to benefit by the prestige which is now associated with public school education? The fact that the Jewish groups, which

have a tradition of intensive Jewish education and are just as concerned to oppose the growth of secularism in our day, are opposed to release time, is a significant phenomenon. Their opposition, though often misinterpreted, arises not merely from the fact that they are rightly afraid of the dangers to any minority group when religion becomes associated with state institutions, but also from the fact that they do not attach much value to the kind of religious instruction that can be given in one hour a week. When Jews compare instruction for one hour a week with daily instruction five times a week after public school hours, or even with two and a half to three hours on Sunday they naturally cannot be enthusiastic about release time supported by the state.

We do believe that it is the duty of public education in a democracy to secure not only understanding, but also convictions with reference to the democratic philosophy of life, even if that goes counter to enthroned prejudices, national, religious, or economic. If public education should impel the young toward "a vigorous personal reaction to the challenge of religion," would not the anti-religionists be entitled to some consideration? As citizens of a free democracy they would have the right to demand that, just as in politics different points of view are presented, so in religion the point of view which negates the positive approach of historical religion should likewise be presented. The effect of granting such freedom to teachers in the public schools can hardly be predicted; the results are not likely to be such as to appeal to us who believe in a positive approach to religion within the life of the religious community itself.

We have not said much in this brief essay, concerning communities where the population is homogenous or almost so. For example, would a community that is on the whole white and Protestant and a few Negroes in it, or a small number of Jews — too small to have a syna-

gogue — offer the kind of "sensitive awareness to the religious resources" which the minority would seek? Suppose the churches were the kind from which Negroes are excluded, as unfortunately they so often are? It seems to us that the dangers of introducing the basic suggestions proposed by the report are much greater than the possible advantages to be derived therefrom. It is true, the writers say that in all matters in which religious education is involved the rights to non-participation should be respected, but when there is a minority in a small community who refuses participation, does not the cry usually arise that the minority is opposed to religion. With the Jews, that has been the case. People tend to forget that Jews give their children an intensive religious education daily after public school hours, or two to three hours of religious education on Sunday morning.

As far as the specific suggestions are concerned, namely, the teaching of secondary Biblical sources in order to acquaint the children with the Bible stories, this is hardly necessary. The children in the lower grades are taught the Bible stories at home or in church or synagogue. In the upper grades there would be no point to giving them secondary sources. There they should read the original sources as they do now under the auspices of the religious institutions. The probability is that the teachers in the religious institutions are as well or better prepared to teach the classic portions of the Bible than are the teachers in the public schools.

If churchmen are not to be complacent, they can achieve much more for religion by the good fight under religious auspices. The great task of our age, it seems to me, is to make religion count for those who profess it and not to be concerned unduly with the minority who do not. If the overwhelming majority of the people who accept religion formally would accept its implications for daily life, we would not need the broken reed of release time

or other more or less similar props from the state. Acceptance of a democratic philosophy of life and taking it seriously involve a strong faith and high purpose even as does religion. To fight for the former in public education and for the latter within the religious groups, seems to us to be the primary task of all men of good will.

ROBERT ULICH

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The decay of civilization always coincides with the desiccation of the human soul. When men are no longer capable of inspiration they lose the imagination which is necessary for believing in great purposes and in doing great deeds. In such periods there also occurs a shifting or degradation in the meaning of words which the tradition has cherished so far as expressing the aspirations of the human spirit. For if the actual motivations behind and within a word disappear, such a word quickly becomes a lifeless abstraction, or the victim of indifference, or the target of critics who have lost all contact with its original significance.

At present such a development can be clearly shown with respect to almost all notions connected with the sphere of transcendent experience, or religion.

There are many enlightened men who would smile if somebody spoke to them of the experience of transcendence. They are proud of their realism and their empirical exactness. Consequently, they refuse to be dragged into an area of subjectivity and uncertainty. But what does the word "transcendent" really mean? It means "going beyond." And may one not seriously ask how a civilization can avoid bogging down whose members no longer dare "go beyond?"

The same phobia that is aroused by the idea of "transcendence" is also caused by the term "metaphysics." It is, for many, combined with notions of superstition, of escape, or of unsubstantiated speculation. But when Aristotle coined the term

"metaphysics," he meant the kind of thought which brings final order and meaning into the variety of physical data, or which, in other words, makes a cosmos out of a mere conglomeration of facts given in nature. If he had meant to say something that is *contradictory* to nature or "physics" — which, needless to say, he would have considered a strange and false enterprise — he would have called it "anti-physics," not "metaphysics," for the Greek preposition "meta" means "next to" or "after."

Finally, let us take a deep breath and introduce the most suspect of all terms, namely "mystic" or "mysticism." As if there were any kind of radical and consistent thinking which would not arrive at a recognition of the boundaries of merely empirical thought, and either wilfully decide to remain within the artificial restrictions of agnosticism, or to venture some embracing vision which leads toward wholeness. This latter process is always of a mystical nature; only those who are ignorant of scientific method and critical theory of knowledge could deny that. Therefore Plato and Aristotle, Descartes and Bergson, Kant and Hegel, Newton and Faraday, are just as well mystics as Master Eckart or Pascal. The thing which has happened as a consequence of modern pseudo-scientific distortion of meanings, is the confusion of "mysticism" with "obscurantism." While mysticism is the coronation of man's mental achievement, obscurantism is its degradation. But how many of our enlightened people really know this fundamental difference?

Now to the last point: the relation between convention and morality. The more independent a man, the more he tries to replace the merely emulative pattern of convention by the stimulative act of a free moral decision. But if one is afraid of transcendence, metaphysics, and intuition — which are the basic elements of religion — where are for him the criteria by which to distinguish the fresh

water of courageous morality from the stale pool of mere habit? Thus the paradox happens that exactly those who in their hostility against any kind of transcendent thought consider themselves the torch bearers of a new society, extinguish (against their own interests) the flame of progress. They cause people to turn around in the vicious circle of aimless experimentation until these deserted souls get exhausted and fall prey to the intoxicant of propaganda.

But how could it come so far? Because exactly the noblest and subtlest qualities of man are also those which are most exposed to error, prejudice, distortion, and exploitation. They need constant checking and vigilance. And since these qualities are often absent and even prevented from developing by the forces of superstition and reaction, often transcendence has become magic, metaphysics anti-physics, mysticism obscurantism, and religion a means of stupefaction. Hence those who attacked certain forms of religious attitude, or, to express it more clearly, of pseudo-religious attitude, were to a degree right; but, they would have been still more right if they had not only torn down the old ramshackle houses, but shown the vision of a new edifice of creative and inspired culture.

Here lies one of the fundamental deficiencies in our modern civilization. Instead of purifying and restoring the wells of mankind's creativeness, we have covered them with the dust of fear. We have preferred to be silent, or not to deal with the deeper background of existence, because we have been afraid of exposing ourselves to the reproach of being unscientific, mystical, or romantic. And in this attitude of mental agoraphobia we have failed to see that we walk along the road toward superficiality and cultural desiccation.

The trend toward isolating the individual activities of man from their universal matrix has been intensified by the modern division of labor, industrialism, and nationalism. So we find ourselves in the amazing situation

that, in spite of momentous progress in many separate fields of life, our civilization has run into a terrific crisis. The Committee on Religion and Education, working under the auspices of the American Council on Education, deserves praise for having taken up the issue, and for the publication of the results of its considerations. Whatever may be our opinion about the contents of the "Report on the Relation of Religion to Public Education," we must hope that it arouses the attention and perhaps also the controversy which will make people aware of the responsibility which education has in relating youth to one of the great problems of our civilization. Nothing is worse than complacency or indifference. Only through great challenges can men in their majority be motivated to think and act. The Committee on Religion and Education is the beginning of such a challenge within the ranks of American educators.

B. OTHANEL SMITH

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Seeing the moral confusion, social fragmentation, and political and economic unrest in the world and at the same time being keenly sensitive to the diminishing church membership and Sunday school attendance, a few individuals and groups have in recent years become deeply concerned about secularism, especially in the public school. They see in religious education a way of checking these undesirable tendencies, and, like other groups having abundant faith in the schools to accomplish their purposes, they turn to public education to accomplish what the churches have failed to do. Although this report pleads for the study of religion on the theory that religion is a fundamental aspect of the culture and hence should not be neglected by the public school, it derives its support from those who are motivated by the desire to stem the waning influence of the church and synagogue.

The report admits, as any candid study of the educational tradition and the religious facts of this country is compelled to admit, that the study of religion must

be non-sectarian. To accomplish this the Committee resurrects the fiction that the teacher can and should be neutral in the study of a controversial subject, a theory which had its brains knocked out over a decade ago. It is now recognized that no controversial question, and surely not a religious issue, can be studied in a value vacuum; that evaluations and judgments are necessarily made, though not always consciously, by both teacher and students at every step of the educative process; and that the claim of neutrality is but a cover for bootlegging value-judgments into the process of education. Even if the neutrality which the Committee desires were possible, it would be difficult to see how such unbiased teaching would necessarily lead to "a positive attitude toward the values that religion represent to the culture" or an impelling of "the young toward a vigorous, decisive personal reaction to the challenge of religion." The result might be, and in many cases will be, just the opposite. The Committee cannot have it both ways at once.

The report tells us that the purpose of religious study in the schools is to acquire information about religion as it has developed in our culture, its relation to the various aspects of the culture, and the expression of the religious life of the community. In addition, the student is to be impelled toward the acceptance of a religious faith. The ways these purposes are to be attained are not fully developed in the report but it suggests that the Bible be studied as religious literature and that the activities and programs of the churches of the community be given the same place in the school program as are accorded the activities of banks, factories, and markets.

On the surface it appears that these purposes can be attained and the suggested program carried on without incurring sectarian opposition. A look beneath the surface, however, robs this view of its plausibility. It is customary in literature courses not only to study literary selec-

tions but also to investigate their history — to study their authors, the conditions under which they were written, their various interpretations, and the like. If the Bible is to become part of the content of courses in literature, surely it must be studied as thoroughly and with as much intellectual respect as is paid to a Dickens novel or a Shakespearean drama. This means that the historical facts about the origin of the scriptures and their subsequent career would be studied; it means that the various interpretations of biblical passages would be examined and an effort made to evaluate them; it means that biblical characters would be analyzed. Could these things be done without arousing fundamental opposition or the fears, if not the hostility, of the more liberal sects?

The non-sectarian principle is basic to our system of public education and we tamper with it at our peril. Religion may be studied in the schools as suggested by the Committee without persistently favoring a particular sect. But it cannot be done without drawing the fire of various sects at various times, nor without the bitter opposition of those who find their security outside of organized religion. Fifty-six per cent of the people of this country belong to no church. It is reasonable to assume that many of them would oppose efforts to impel children to accept some religious faith, as the Committee advocates. They would do so rightly on the grounds that this is a violation of the non-sectarian principle; that the public school as an arm of the state has no authority to urge acceptance of an organized religion even though no particular sect were implied by the exhortation.

Of course, it can be argued that the Bible is merely to be read or enjoyed as an aesthetic object. But this is hardly what the Committee desires. Moreover, the individual child has a right to ask questions or to express his opinion about the Bible. If he is challenged by the

teacher or the class, and he is certain to be in the modern classroom where freedom of thought is encouraged and where there are many sects represented as well as the non-church-going population, the only way of resolving the issue is to appeal to facts or values, or to both. These facts and values are themselves often subjects of controversy among various sects. In any case, religious controversy is almost certain to be unavoidable, especially when the classroom discussion reaches the home.

The picture looks no brighter when we consider the programs and activities of the church and synagogue as the objects of study. Not only would facts about such things as the recreational programs of the church, services rendered to the sick and the poverty stricken, and the like, be included in the curriculum, but also facts about what the church has from time to time condoned and its effects upon the life of the community. The latter are not always pleasing and discussion of them in the classroom will most certainly bring down the wrath of some elements of the community. Organized religion would be examined in the same way as other social institutions — by their effects upon human beings. How many devout church members would stand by and condone the study of such facts about church membership and community life as are revealed in Thorndike's *Your City*? Moreover, the programs and activities of the religious bodies will necessarily be evaluated by the students and the teacher will unavoidably be involved. The work of one sect will be weighted against that of another. In all these things sectarian opposition will be unavoidable. If they are handled in such a way as to please all, the instruction will be open to serious question by non-church members who constitute the majority of the population.

If the recommendations of this report were carried out, it is by no means certain that organized religion would regain any of its prestige. It is at least an open question that traditional beliefs would be

strengthened by religious instruction in the school. One authority on the history of Christianity has observed that "The Bible historically understood is exceedingly dangerous to the inherited traditional faith of the American child."*

The contention of the Committee that the diminishing influence of the church and synagogue is attributable to the secularization of life is too simple. Perhaps it would be nearer the truth to say that the social forces which precipitated the disintegration of the church several centuries ago are still with us and that they have gained in strength and have been joined by new forces. The Committee might well have begun its work with an inquiry into the causes of the rapid decline of the church in the twentieth century. After such a social diagnosis it might have been in a better position to prescribe, and it is almost certain to have reached the conclusion that the declining influence of the church and synagogue is due to a complex of social forces rather than the failure to study religion in the schools.

The report of the Committee is hortatory rather than analytical. It sounds as if it were written to soften-up the opposition to the introduction of religious study in the public school, by sliding over the issues with generalities that tend to sooth the reader by explaining away his fears. Its general effect on the casual reader is to induce the specious belief that the relation of church and state is on the whole not to be feared since the separation is only relative anyway.

SAMUEL P. FRANKLIN
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This report of the American Council committee avoids the two extreme positions commonly advocated today in considering the relation of religion to public education. At one extreme are those who maintain that public education contains

within itself the possibilities of realizing those moral and spiritual values most essential in religious education without the introduction of specific religious subject matter. At the other extreme are those who insist with equal conviction that the cultivation of these spiritual values in children and youth of our public schools cannot be adequately accomplished except through courses in religion that rely definitely upon religious subject matter.

With the purpose of the first position the committee is in essential agreement; namely, "that democracy is a spiritual ideal, that cooperation, mutual aid, self discipline, kindness, courtesy, and the like are spiritual values." But the committee also holds that this concept of spiritual values does not embody the full, valid content of religion; that religion has not only its personal and private aspect but that historically "it is profoundly social as expressed in ceremonial ritual and liturgy." A full consideration of spiritual values therefore must include the study of religious institutions.

The committee would also avoid the second extreme, that of putting a separate course in religion in the school curriculum; "because it might perpetuate the secularist pattern by which religious subject matter is separate from everything else." Accordingly "religion is not something to be added into the school curriculum but rather something to be integrated with it." This point is made and maintained by one of the strongest arguments in the entire report.

What program then does the committee offer that would most adequately accomplish the desired ends of religious education in its relation to public education and yet escape the weaknesses of the two extremes? It is definitely opposed to setting aside the broad political principle of the separation of church and state. The heterogenous character of our religious population puts any such consideration beyond debate. It does, however,

*Moehlman, Conrad Henry. *School and Church*, p. 121.

strongly insist that the separation of church and state has extended far beyond the original intention expressed, and that "the divorce of public education from ecclesiastical control is not synonymous with the separation of religion from education."

More specifically, the committee holds that it is the purpose of education to give to the young an understanding and appreciation of our total culture, and that since religion historically and today actually is a large aspect of that culture no program of general education is adequate that leaves this large area of human concern untouched. It is recommended, therefore, that we restudy the curriculum for the purpose of determining those areas or subjects that most naturally and most adequately reflect this religious heritage and that offer the best opportunity for facilitating contact with religion as it has developed in our culture and among our institutions. The committee holds this to be one of the primary obligations of our public education. It further believes that this can be accomplished without violating the original intention of the separation of church and state.

The committee offers the social studies as providing the most fruitful approach for this purpose below the college level. For instance, the inclusion and study of contemporary religious institutions, so often omitted from or so little referred to in social science texts, are a part of our contemporary life and culture as much as are government, markets, banking, labor, and other institutions usually treated quite adequately in the same texts. In this same connection the reviewer has recently examined a widely used high school text book in social science for the purpose of determining the nature and extent of specific reference to religion or religious institutions to be found in this book. In some six or eight different places in the book such references were made, but always in a very brief and most incidental manner. The total number would represent slightly more than a sin-

gle page of some 600 pages in the book. It is possible that if a visitor from Mars were to rely upon this source book for his information about our community life, and this book was concerned chiefly with our community life, he might easily arrive at the conclusion that our United States is a country of few if any religious institutions. Furthermore, it might be exceedingly difficult for us to explain to this distant visitor just how such omissions came about and why they continue.

It would seem that one thing to be commended in this report is the direct and realistic manner in which the committee has attacked this problem. It isn't approached as something which can be discussed and dismissed for further consideration at a later time, but rather as an issue and situation which requires not only serious thought but action as well. It is a matter on which we cannot wait for a completely satisfactory theory or solution before getting underway, but one that has to be approached experimentally. Justice Holmes said, "The life of the law has not been logic but experience." And also that, "the secret root from which the law draws all its juices of life are consideration of what is expedient for the community." There is much in our history and the history of other countries that will help us in working out the best solution to the problem of the relation of religion to public education. We must be guided in every way possible by this past experience. But the answer in regard to many of its elements lies in the future only as we are willing to experiment and learn as we go. This experiment is already under way in this country on a large scale. This report, I believe, leaves this way open and challenges us to venture in it.

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The report on *The Relation of Religion to Public Education* is clearly both a competent and sincere pronouncement. It deserves the careful reading of all who

are convinced of the importance to the well-being of our culture of better relations between these two great areas of American life. Out of the thoughtful study of this and other noteworthy statements, which have appeared in recent years as the relation of religion and education, reasonable men may expect to reach greater agreement on both the theoretical and practical issues involved in bringing the two areas closer together.

Many of the positions taken in the report as to religion will be supported generally by those in public education. That religion is an indispensable ingredient of a healthy society, that religion should influence all spheres of life including the economic, that no one is fully educated who has not gained a knowledge of the faiths men live by, and that all citizens should have some understanding of the history of religion and of religious institutions and of religious organizations as a major element in our culture — these and many other positions taken by the report will be supported by most educators.

Likewise, many of the pronouncements on education will be applauded by those who serve in the public schools, such as, the recognition that education may produce citizens appreciative of, and loyal to democracy without becoming agencies of indoctrination, that education must equip the young to *pass* on the culture as well to *pass on* the culture, and that education must lead to conviction and action rather than inert neutrality.

At one major point, however, the report fails to recognize the full implications for religion and public education of the fact that religion in modern times is still too much occupied with theological and dogmatic emphases which stem from the middle ages. The statement sins far less in this regard than most churchmen do today. Even so, the report at several critical points is bound too much by chains of theology and dogma forged in past ages and too little emphasizes that the great work of religious leadership to-

day is the dynamic application of the great conceptions of the Hebraic-Christian ethic to the infinitely complex life of modern mankind. This tragic failure in emphasis explains why western religion today is so much less influential than it should be in maintaining spiritual and moral values in individual, national and international life. It explains "the secularization of modern life" far more adequately than all the causes given in the report. It explains why sectarian conflict still curses western religion. It explains why it is so difficult for churchmen and schoolmen to cooperate in producing citizens who are both intelligent and moral.

Where does responsibility lie for the fact that the public school finds it so difficult to do many of the fine things which the report would have it do, and which schoolmen would like to have it do? Are Horace Mann and other founders of public education to blame? "No," says the report, "Mann actually favored religious instruction in the schools to the fullest extent possible . . ." Did the citizens of a century ago want "to eliminate religion from education?" Again the report answers: "No." Where does the responsibility lie? The report gives this answer:

" . . . the American people felt driven to the conclusion that if religious teaching could not be carried on in the public schools without sectarian strife, it would have to go." And later in the report: "It is, to be sure, largely the fault of the churches that religion in the western world appears not as a unifying but as a divisive force."

In short, the reason the schools went "secular" was rampant sectarianism, and the same factor is the root cause of why reports such as the one under consideration have to be written — and also of why response to it in action will be far less rapid than might be hoped for. Schoolmen can do little in dealing with the fundamental difficulty involved here. Churchmen might do much if they would face more to the future and less to the past.

Before closing this brief and incomplete reaction, acknowledgement should be made of a number of fine features of the report, such as: the recognition that public schools foster spiritual values and an attitude of reference, and the listing of desirable additions to the curriculum such as content giving some knowledge of the role of religion in our history and of the functions of religious organizations. Space will not permit even mention of some parts of the pronouncement with which issue would be taken if this statement were longer.

Without accepting all of its positions and findings, I am happy, however, to welcome this report as a major contribution to the field with which it deals.

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From this reviewer's point of view, *The Relation of Religion to Public Education—The Basic Principles* is a notable and epoch-making document.

The deep concern about the unintended and unforeseen consequences for education of the exclusion of religion from public education as a result of social conditions in the nineteenth century led the Whitehouse Conference on Children in a Democracy to make the urgent recommendation that

Practical steps should be taken to make available to children and youth through education the resources of religion as an important factor in the democratic way of life and in the development of personal and social integrity. To this end the Conference recommends that a critical and comprehensive study be made of the various experiences both of the churches and of the schools in dealing with the problem of religion in relation to public education. The purpose of such a study would be to discover how these phases of education may best be provided for in the total program of education, without in any way violating the principle of the separation of church and state.¹

This document is the first step in a series of projected studies that will seek to provide a constructive solution for a situation that in the light of changing conditions

has become increasingly unsatisfactory, if not intolerable.

The great merit of this report is that it goes directly to the heart of the problem without slurring or evading the issue. It correctly diagnoses the problem as inhering in the dichotomy of our secularized culture and in the fundamental defect of a public program of education that, while purporting to interpret and evaluate our culture, actually distorts and dismembers it by excluding religion as one of the oldest and most basic constituent elements of historical and contemporary culture. Without equivocation it recommends the constructive solution which the facts of the situation seem to demand without resort to half-measures.

In the light of more than a half-century of the scientific study of religion, the Committee is entirely correct in conceiving religion as primarily a social phenomenon and as an integral phase of a people's total culture, comparable with science, philosophy, technology, and the arts. Unfortunately, the fact has been obscured by the radical individualism of the post-Renaissance world and of Protestantism. As a revaluing experience, religion is inseparable from every phase of man's practical interests and activities in every dimension of the common life. As such, it sustains a reciprocal relation of integration and criticism of these practical interests and activities in terms of a total meaning and worth of life in its universal perspectives.

The logic of this conception, as the report rightly points out, is that the study of religion should constitute an integral part of education by which society undertakes to interpret its cultural heritage to its immature members and to assist them in achieving a creative interaction with the realities of their present world. Failure to include religion on the same basis as other aspects of culture, such as science, philosophy, literature, and the arts, is wrongly to narrow the scope of educa-

1. *Proceedings of the Whitehouse Conference on Children in a Democracy* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Labor, 1940) p. 31.

tion, to deprive the young of the resources of religion for personal and social living, and to place a negative value upon religion through silence or neglect.

One of the most valuable contributions of the report is the distinction which it makes between *teaching* religion and the *study* of religion. *Teaching* religion assumes a definite theological content and tends to result in the reduction of content to a sterile irreducible minimum on the one hand or to propagandist sectarian use on the other. The *study* of religion makes it a subject of inquiry by the use of the same objective methods employed in history, literature, the natural and social sciences, and the arts. Thus religion can be dealt with in its full-bodied content, its variant and developing historical forms, and its different interpretations by the several religious groups, without the slightest trace of sectarianism or propaganda. Religion as a form of personal and social behavior is as amenable to observation, analysis, and appraisal as any other form of human behavior.

To this reviewer it also seems to follow from the functional relation of religion to culture, as the report points out, that religion as a subject of study in the curriculum should be approached as an aspect of the several fields of study rather through a department of religion. Perhaps more than any other subject, religion cuts across all departmental boundaries. Much as other subjects suffer from the present departmentalization of education, religion by its nature as a comprehending experience suffers most when set off from its sustaining sources in every area of man's intellectual and practical concern. The reviewer would hold this to be true at the university level.²

Such a study of religion does not, except under faulty methods, result in an arid *knowledge about* religion. Seeing religion as the outgrowth of man's fundamental nature and his age-long interac-

tion with his world of reality is a sure way to the appreciation of religion and to profound convictions.

The Committee's approach to the relation of church and state is sociologically sound and points the way to a constructive solution of an involved problem that is greatly in need of restudy in the light of an evolving society. The older approach has been on the structural level where church and state were in competition and often in conflict. On the functional level they appear as differentiated functions of the total community. As such they sustain complementary and co-operative relations.

Rightly the Committee points out that the inclusion of religion as a subject of study in public education in no way relieves the church or the family of responsibility for religious nurture. On the contrary, by freeing them from a responsibility which they have shown themselves incompetent to discharge, they would be released to undertake those aspects of religious nurture which they, better than any other agency, are equipped to perform.

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POSITIVE VALUES IN THE REPORT

1. It recognizes religion as an integral phase of culture, its ideas, ideals, and practices affecting all other areas of life, and therefore an essential part of the public school's field of study.
2. It states the need for an objective, unbiased study of the literature, institutions, and main ideas and practices of religion. With organized religion acting as a divisive force in society there is urgent need for mutual understanding, and for development of criteria by which to judge the central concepts and values involved in religion.
3. The position taken that a study of religion should be more than an intellectual understanding of the various

2. Cf. "An Area of Concentration," *Religious Education*, March-April, 1947, p. 74 f.

forms, doctrines, and traditions, is sound. In keeping with all good educational principles learning should result in convictions and consistent actions. Without attempting any indoctrination or seeking uniform response, there is an expectation that the study of religion should have a wholesome stimulating affect on conduct.

4. The committee gives its working definition of religion, and analyzes to some degree the kinds of study which it proposes. Though these statements invite critical comment, and cannot expect to have unanimous agreement from its readers, it is nevertheless a good place to begin in exchange of ideas.
5. The precedent of scientific method being used in social studies is used to suggest possibilities in the field of religion. The committee seems afraid of trusting too much to this type of thinking, but seems to recognize the futility of evaluating speculative phases of religion by variant opinions.
6. It is agreed that religion may be studied to better advantage as a phase of culture in any subject where the data is relevant, rather than treated as a formal addendum to other courses. At the level of higher education it sees special need for particular critical studies in the psychology, history, philosophy, and literature of religion.
7. The preparation of teachers is acknowledged a vital factor in the whole proposal. The committee however feels that it should not be impossible to educate teachers to handle religion as well as any other area of the social sciences.
8. Week Day Religious Education on Released Time is not regarded as a solution. The committee recommends that experiments along this line should be carefully appraised. It questions assumptions regarding existing Bible study programs in the public schools.
9. The method of introducing its radical proposals seems wise. The committee would not introduce any such program without a community being ready for it. It would have the plan started as an experiment, to be modified as experience proved expedient. It would make the studies in religion voluntary on the part of pupils, but would make school boards feel an obligation to present an adequate opportunity for religious studies.
10. There is not expectation that religion can be reduced to a common core of instructional materials, and if there could be a majority agreement as to teaching it would tend to indoctrination and disregard for minorities.
11. There is agreement that public education should be kept in the hands of the public, and that there should be no ecclesiastical control of political functions. The inconsistency of handing over to parochial schools the right to educate American children is not dealt with, but is of real concern to our democracy.
12. It is admitted that the public schools are "undoubtedly engaged in a spiritual enterprise", but it is said that the resources of religion are needed to preserve these spiritual values. No suggestion is made as to how "religion" acts to preserve such.
13. A naturalistic philosophy is recognized as having religious assumptions just as much as a supernaturalistic philosophy, but the differences in assumptions and philosophy are not discussed.
14. There is repeated recognition that there is "an artificial separation between what may be called the things of the mind and the things of the spirit."

CRITICAL COMMENTS

1. There is a confusing use of the term "religion" throughout the report. The meaning given in section three — supreme allegiance to ultimate reality — is certainly vague, for widely varying concepts of "ultimate reality" are admitted each of which would require a special interpretation of "supreme al-

- legiance." Frequently religion seems to refer to the church, or a church. Again it implies dogma, uncritical mores, tradition, and is a vague offset to something secular. There certainly is need for clarification of the range of beliefs, customs, institutions, attitudes, and presuppositions included under religion. A good critical study should reveal the significance of the outreach of man for meanings, goals, and spiritual resources. It should also stimulate interest in values, and re-evaluation of values, with better chance for purposeful and worthwhile living.
2. There seems to be an inconsistency in use of the term secularization for values generally associated with religion persist even when dissociated from "religion." Life has a unity inspite of cateborizations. Though one may reject certain forms of religion, and have no desire to be called religious, yet such a person might be as much interested in, and committed to, spiritual values and underlying cosmic meanings as any so-called religionist. To speak of God, or ultimate reality, may not imply an actual adjustment to the basic general laws, or principles, discovered in the processes of living. The qualities of spiritual, or religious, grow slowly and need identification in life situations.
 3. It is a serious question whether schools are the places to begin this objective study of religion, and to look for outcomes which may influence conduct through giving "religion" more attention in cultural studies. Informal adult groups are probably the most fruitful possibilities. Parents should be prepared to deal with religious ideas at home, and the religious spirit should have its origin and nurture in refined family living. Churches could combine to distinct advantage and organize much better programs than they have in out-of-school hours. Schools could contribute a great deal along lines suggested by the committee, but they will work better when other agencies of a modern community are sensitive to these values and meanings and do their part in making them operative in growing lives.
 4. If supernatural concepts are discounted it should not be implied that an attack is being made upon any faith. Supernaturalism is generally associated with a primitive way of picturing the world and the processes of life. If any individual or religious group is satisfied to use such ideas and imagery in description of beliefs and events, it must be willing to suffer criticism or else give a rational support of its position that can command respect of religious people who use other thought terms and concepts. Supernatural ideas should not be considered peculiarly religious, for they represent psychological and philosophical constructs, that need examination and reconstruction. There may be a sincere and worthy religious attitude clothed in misconceived imagery and thought terms. Supernaturalism is a problem for psychology and philosophy not for religious argumentation.
 5. Religion is assumed to have an autonomy of its own, while like attitudes in other fields are condemned. There should be a clear recognition that learning in one area of life must affect learnings in all others, both in concepts and in methods of thinking. All significant thinking implies evaluation, and generalization, and religion has no source of insight or values different from other organized knowledge. It is the same kind of people who formulate theories of economics, science, and religion, and a person may be interested in them all and have insights of each kind. They are inseparably related. Religious ideas need to be subjected to the same kind of critical examination as any other.
 6. There will be great difficulty in getting this objective study of religion even when the values of such are recognized. Few theological schools do much more

- than indoctrinate their students, seldom stimulating critical creative thinking. Few denominational leaders have faith in free inquiry. There is a general tendency to be conservative and vague, to avoid controversy over precise statements. It will be extremely difficult to develop an atmosphere of freedom, and to secure teachers who can use freedom to advantage.
7. The report does not seem to give enough attention to the functional aspects of religion, and yet perhaps this approach promises more chance of furthering mutual understandings than any other. Even theological differences may not seem so divisive if attention is directed to "divine processes" rather than to conceptual presuppositions of ultimate reality. Though the history of religious ideas and institutions may have value in understanding cultural developments, the center of interest might be in the values, and personal-social conduct associated with religious growth. Conceivable of functionally this will be discoverable, and educable, in all phases of life. In this report orthodox sanctions seem more important than spiritual achievements. If religion is to be an

integrating experience it will come in relation to growing insights and values rather than in trying to merge vested interests under some religious hierarchy.

8. The fact that "the common life is so largely divorced from the sanctions of the religious-ethical tradition" might imply that religious insights and values have become so pervasive that "conceptions of worth, of right, of duty, and of human destiny" do not come from theological concepts of ultimate reality, but from more general philosophizing on a wider range of experiences. The point of view that is taken relative to "what is religion" will modify the goals, methods, and materials used in such studies as are proposed in this report. A limited study might become a clever scheme for indoctrination into a closed system of religious thought and practice. The tools for analytic and synthetic studies will need to be carefully prepared. Scientific method, psychological and sociological methods, critical-historical methods, literary and artistic methods all may contribute to understanding and appreciation of developing religious meanings, values, institutions, conduct, and intergrated life.

ADVENTURES IN Religion and Education

COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY LABORATORY. "The college of the future must be far more aware than many are today of the possibilities of using the neighborhood as an educational laboratory. It must explore opportunities for its students to see business in action and to check the actual working of government machinery with their reading about government, to train them to explore the recreational and health facilities of the community, the role of churches, schools, and libraries, business and labor, to study the work of charitable institutions, to investigate housing conditions—the relation of juvenile delinquency and tuberculosis, living conditions, racial distribution and causes of discrimination". (Said by Constance Warren in *the Standard*)

*Edited by Sub-Committee: Dr. Israel S. Chipkin, Miss Martha Du Berry, Dr. Donald M. Maynard, Miss Ruth Shriver, Dr. Philip L. Seman.

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH. Action Program for 1947-48, includes 11 major emphases: (1) Extension of social-security programs affecting family income (2) Expansion of federal and state cooperative programs of child welfare (3) Expansion of federal and state cooperative program for maternal and child health (4) Expansion of mental health and guidance programs for children (5) Federal and state aid to education (6) Recreational opportunity (7) Improved child-labor legislation (8) Employment opportunities (9) State and community planning for children and youth (10) Youth participation (11) International programs.

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The Editorial Committee regrets the necessity of reducing this section in this issue. Much material is on hand and will appear in later issues.

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